## In this issue…

Dr. Andrea Gondos: Studying Jewish mysticism

page 9

JFS Voices

page 16

Hot Pink Controversy

page 20

**Washtenaw Jewish News**
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# WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

**OCTOBER 2025** **Tishrei /Cheshvan 5786** **Volume XXVI Number 1** **FREE**

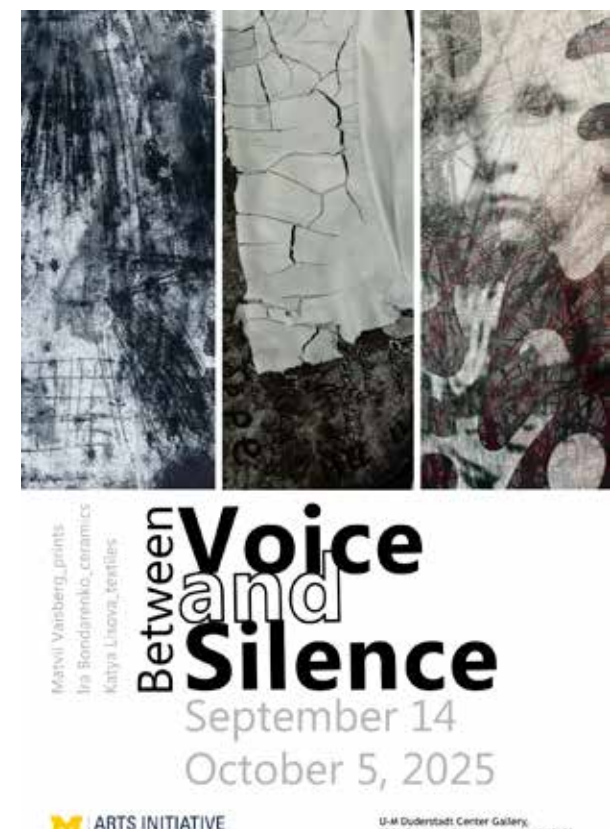
## Israeli musical duo, Yonina, in Ann Arbor

*By Rabba Yael Keller and Ariella Keller*

We are so excited to share that internationally acclaimed Israeli musical duo Yonina prepares to bring their soulful harmonies and heartwarming energy to Ann Arbor for a special, live concert. Set to take place on Sunday, November 16, at the JCC, the event promises to be an unforgettable evening of music, spirit, and connection.

For those who haven't yet discovered the magic of Yonina, the duo — comprising married couple Yoni and Nina Tokayer — has taken the Jewish and global music scene by storm over the past several years. Known for their uplifting original songs and stirring covers of Israeli and Jewish favorites, Yonina has garnered millions of views online and a devoted following across continents. Yoni and Nina have been singing together since they met, have been married for 10 years, and have four sweet children who occasionally make guest

*Continues on page 5*




## Fiddler on the Roof in Nicaragua

*By Steve Merritt*

**Meir blows the shofar, a call to the Jews of Nicaragua.**

Nicaragua is a poor place with problematic politics where it is hard enough to survive, let alone be a Jew. Life is a balancing act. And yet, the people I met there on my visit in July were determined to hold onto their Jewish identity and build community.

I connected with the Nicaraguan Jewish community through Kulanu (kulanu.org), an organization whose mission is to "support isolated, emerging, and returning Jewish communities around the globe."

I am inspired by photographs from 33 communities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America that Kulanu stays in touch with. Being Jewish in these places is not easy. And they are a reminder that the Jewish people are more than just the white, Ashkenazi Jews we Americans often imagine.

During my visit to the Central American country of Nicaragua, I was able to deliver almost 100 pounds of Jewish books and ritual objects to two fledgling Jewish groups.

I received generous support for this project from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, Beth Israel Congregation, and a handful of donors from the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation.

### *My Nicaragua connection*

The visit brought together two longtime interests of mine: Jewish values and community and Latin America. My interest in Judaism has focused on fostering community and the sense that we really are "our brothers' keepers." I've created numerous programs in the Jewish community and served on several boards. My interest in Latin America dates from when I began studying Spanish in 2000. Since then, I have trav-

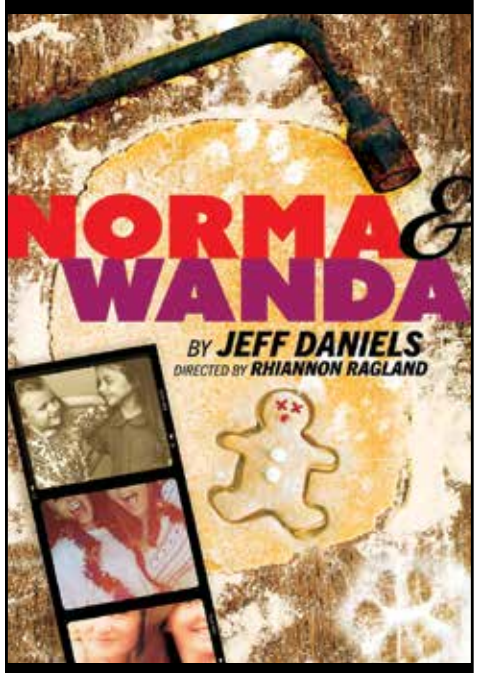
*Continues on page 12*

# Advertisers


A2 Artoberfest.....13
Alex Milshteyn, Realtor.....3
Ann Arbor District Library.....23
Bank of Ann Arbor.....23
Bivouac.....23
Frankel Center for Judaic Studies.....11
Giraffe Design Build.....22
Hurwitz-Greene Real Estate.....8
Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.....15
Pam Sjo, The Reinhart Company.....2
Purple Rose Theatre Company.....2
R.D. Kleinschmidt.....2
Wallenberg Medal and Lecture.....11
Wolverine Tax & Financial.....3
Zekelman Holocaust Center.....24
Zemyck Pottery.....23



the PurpleRose theatre company




Two very different sisters get themselves into an outrageous pickle with an old high school boyfriend, a chaotic church social and a secret family recipe for Christmas sausage.

*Contains adult language and subject matter.*

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# From the editor

## May our sukkot bring hopefulness and protection

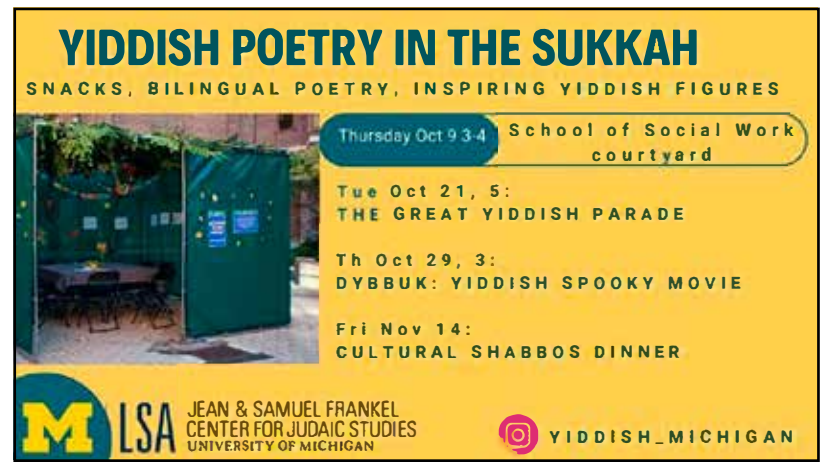
It's a new year, 5786. I'll admit, I've been on a rollercoaster this week as I read both the news (mostly devastating) and the holiday wishes from my friends and family, trying their best to start the new year with hopefulness and calm, even if joy is an ask too far.

This issue of WJN includes news of Jews in Washtenaw who create new siddurs, cook and eat and celebrate, make art, movies, and music, study genealogy, write books and essays, try to make our community a better place to live, and uplift Jews in other parts of the diaspora. We are a busy people.

My editorial focus for the *Washtenaw Jewish News* is to make the paper a container for a broadening array of local voices so that readers will know what others are doing and thinking, even if we disagree. If you don't feel represented in the pages of WJN, I invite you to send me your thoughts. If you feel the paper sees and hears you, let me know that as well.

The medium of print newspapers delivered to your door and available to pick up in common spaces is so old school it's almost obsolete, but there's also an irrepressible attachment to the needs it fulfills. If you haven't watched the new mockumentary sitcom "The Paper," give it a watch. It's a slow start, but I'm enjoying it.

Shana tova, may your fast be easy, and may your sukka give you just the amount of protection you need. ■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**Phone numbers, websites, and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:**

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM): 1429 Hill Street, 248-408-3269, annarborminyan.org

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-445-1910, aarecon.org

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washtenaw Ave, 734-665-9897, bethisrael-aa.org

Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-3276, jewmich.com

Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies (EMU): www.emich.edu/jewish-studies/

Frankel Center: 202 S. Thayer St., lsa.umich.edu/judaic/

Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccannarbor.org

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishculturalsociety.org

Jewish Family Services (JFS): 2245 South State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org

Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org

Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-761-5324, pardeshannah.org

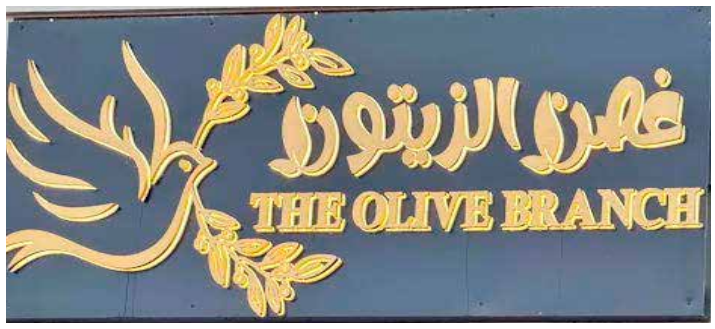
Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org

UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500, michiganhillel.org

# Extending the olive branch in Ypsilanti

*By Candace Bulkley and Trina Fuller*

*Candace and Trina became friends in the Temple Beth Emeth adult b-mitzvah class that graduated in 2022. They will be honing their palates, visiting, and writing about a variety of independent, locally owned Washtenaw County restaurants, catering to a variety of dietary preferences.*




We caught wind of a newly opened Middle Eastern restaurant in Ypsilanti and frankly, that news didn't stir us to investigate quickly. After all, there is no shortage of Middle Eastern food in Southeast Michigan. Then we learned its name — The Olive Branch, and that was intriguing. It's a Palestinian restaurant located in a strip mall on Ellsworth at Hewitt Road. How does this cuisine differ from the typically Lebanese style found in our area? A check of their website revealed a stunning menu and pages filled with delicious sounding, yet unfamiliar, food as well as variations on well-known favorites. There were no manifestos or political statements anywhere to be seen — only an image of a dove flying with an olive branch in her beak, and food that we had to try. Our goal is to highlight and support independent restaurants in our area. Admittedly, we initially had reservations about bringing this article to the Jewish community. But, in the end, we decided that learning about our neighbors, sharing their culture and food, and asking questions is a positive action which leads to better relationships, and doing this is aligned with our values.

The Olive Branch has a breakfast/lunch menu and a separate dinner menu with a more extensive food selection. We joined them for lunch and found no shortage of dishes to try, focusing on the unfamiliar and adding in a few more ubiquitous items for comparison.

Our meal began with a fattoush salad — a favorite. Made with a tender spring mix rather than iceberg or romaine lettuce, freshly fried pita, and plentiful fresh vegetables. Especially delicious were the Persian cucumbers, which are smaller, crisp, not watery, and have very few seeds. The dressing was served on the side and was a thicker emulsified version of the traditional sumac vinaigrette, but still tasty. There was plenty to share, and it could easily be an appetizer for four. Next came the lentil soup. The Olive Branch version was much heartier than most and less seasoned than others we have tried. This beautifully golden, stick-to-your-ribs soup seemed like it would be the perfect antidote to a Michigan winter day.

Two unfamiliar dishes appeared next. The Cheese Arayes were pita filled with a mild white cheese that was dusted with thyme and griddled until golden. The addition of the thyme elevated a simple food into something really delicious. The Musakhan Rolls are described on the menu as crispy golden rolls, filled with chicken, onion, and spices. The shredded chicken was liberally seasoned with the warm spice mix known as 9-spice and chopped onion, all tucked and rolled into a loose phyllo dough cigar, and fried to near perfection. The flavor of the well-seasoned meat came through and made for some delightful bites, but we would have liked less residual oil. The same goes for the Fried Eggplant, which had excellent flavor and a luxurious creamy texture, but dripped with oil. Our least favorite plate was the Batata Hara — spicy diced potatoes. They were spicy as promised, but had an unusual taste and texture that did not wow us.

Noticing a Chicken Shawarma plate on the menu, we wanted to see how it measured up to the others we have had. A colorful plate arrived with lovely bronzed chicken on a bed of yellow hued turmeric rice and surrounded with pickles, red onion, and chopped tomato. The chicken breast had a nice charred flavor but we found it a bit dry. The plate was served with the garlic sauce "toum," which was much less garlicky than others we have had, and an unidentified sauce that was like a tomatoey mayonnaise. The two worked well with the chicken and redeemed the spicy potatoes somewhat.

The last dish to arrive at our table was the standout. Hummus Fattah with Nuts. It was layered with creamy hummus, lemony tahini, chickpeas, yogurt, finely chopped jalapeno, and pita, generously topped with freshly toasted cashews and almonds. Neither of us had ever had anything like it. As the server placed it on our table, we could

***continued on page 11***

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# Book launch for Remnants by Hank Greenspan

On Sunday, October 5, the Voice/Vision Holocaust Survivor Oral History Archive will host a major event celebrating the launch of Henry "Hank" Greenspan's *Remnants and What Remains: Moments from a Life Among Holocaust Survivors*, which is dedicated to the memory of Professor Sidney Bolkosky, the founder and longtime director of the archive. The event will be both online and in person at UM-Dearborn. The new book is published by Wayne State University Press.

Greenspan and Bolkosky were close friends and colleagues for over 33 years; they called each other "brothers." Each pursuing years of sustained acquaintance with Holocaust survivors living in the Detroit area — Sid an historian; Hank a psychologist-playwright — they were themselves in continuous conversation about how to most usefully and ethically engage the survivors whom they both knew. They often wrote together, created events together, and taught together. But the core of it was what Greenspan calls "the conversation." In the new book, a literary memoir, he recalls:

"Sid and I started interviewing around the same time, and we became close with many of the same survivors. Whenever we were together — whether at our offices or at conferences, weddings, bar mitzvahs, family occasions of all kinds — we ended in a corner having what we called 'the conversation.' It could easily go on for hours. Our families weren't thrilled. But we were obsessed, driven to share insights and reflections about the survivors whom we both knew. Without 'the conversation,' there is no possibility that I could have done the work I did, either as teacher or as writer."

In contrast with conventional, single "testimonies," Greenspan pioneered an approach based on depth rather than breadth. Over more than 50 years, he met with the same survivors multiple times: over months, years, and — with a few survivors — decades. His work demonstrates that what survivors retell, and how they retell it, is different in the context of sustained acquaintance than in single meetings. In significant part, the approach was suggested by survivors themselves. Early on, many said, "Come back next week. We'll meet again. We'll talk some more." In the 1970s when Greenspan began his work, relatively few survivors spoke with anyone, beyond other survivors, about the destruction and the years that followed.

Along with scholarly books and many articles, one outcome of his approach was Greenspan's play *Remnants,* originally produced at Michigan Radio in Ann Arbor and distributed on NPR in 1991 and 1992. As a stage play, *Remnants* has been performed at more than 300 venues worldwide, including the John Houseman Theater in New York, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Magdeburg Attic Theatre in the former Theresienstadt Ghetto, a space used for performance during the Holocaust itself.

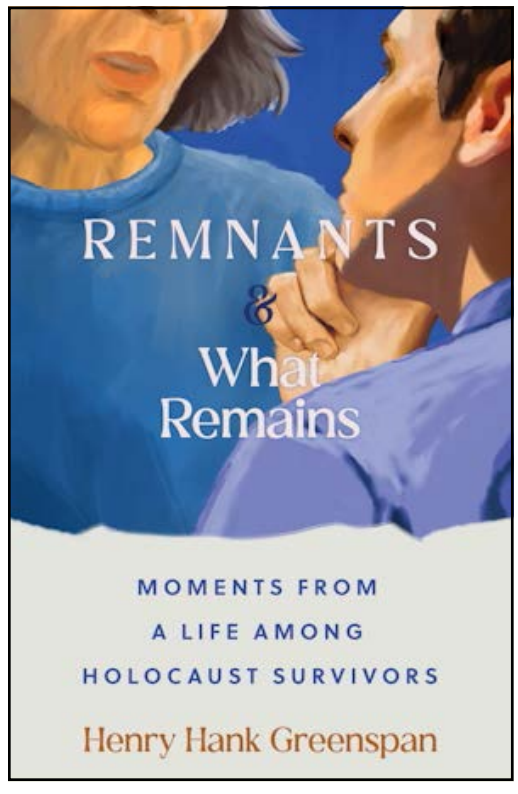
The new book includes the first in-print publication of the playscript of *Remnants.* It also includes a companion piece, "What Remains." In "What Remains," a literary memoir, Greenspan reflects upon the creation and response to *Remnants*, most memorable moments from his wider relationships with survivors, his loss of many of them in recent years, and their loss of a world. Many have described the book as a conjoining of memory and memorial. A performance video of *Remnants* can be found at: https://youtu.be/Vty8b_euk-k

Along with a welcome by Dr. Jamie Wraight, the launch event will include brief reflections by three of Greenspan's closest colleagues, all internationally known Holocaust scholars and teachers: Professor John K. Roth, Emeritus Professor at Claremont-McKenna University; Professor Malin Thor Tureby, Professor of History at Malmo University in Sweden; and Dr. Christine Schmidt, Deputy Director of the Wiener Library in London and a former student of Bolkosky's.

Greenspan will then present a brief performance/recitation drawn from the new book. In the spirit of his relationship with Bolkosky, and both of their relationships with survivors, there will also be ample time for conversation.

To register for in-person attendance, contact Jamie Wraight at jwraight@umich.edu

For online registration (required), go to: https://umich.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FiukzW7PSzOpiuhyrm6SGg ■




# A2 Artoberfest

The Guild of Artists & Artisans (The Guild) is proud to announce the fifth annual A2 Artoberfest Fine Art Fair, Saturday and Sunday October 11 and 12 in downtown Ann Arbor. The event stretches across Ann Street and North Fourth Avenue, from Huron into the charming Kerrytown area. This intimate and rich celebration of the arts will feature 100 jury selected artists, live entertainment, food vendors, art activities, and several adult beverage offerings, including craft cocktails from the Ann Arbor Distilling Company, mead and cider from Bløm Meadworks, wine from Babylonstoren, and beer provided by M4. Fairgoers who are 21 and older will be able to stroll the entire event while enjoying their beverages.

The event includes close to 100 jury selected artists, featuring jewelry, ceramics, painting, glass, photography, fiber, and more. The Guild has been helping raise community awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the visual arts, while maintaining a support network for artists, for more than 50 years. A2 Artoberfest provides another opportunity for folks in and around Ann Arbor to enjoy fine art in a smaller setting than the Ann Arbor Summer Art Fair (also produced by The Guild) while enjoying the festive spirit of fall with live entertainment, food, and beverages.

Music and live entertainment will fill the air throughout the event presented by this year's Live Entertainment Sponsor, The Dermatology Specialists of Ann Arbor and Dexter. Entertainment will include various styles of music from local musicians like Lorian Janine who will perform Saturday from 3:30–5:30p.m. Check out our website for more information at https://www.theguild.org/fair/a2artoberfest/entertainment/.

The Guild of Artists and Artisans produces a total of eight fine art fairs annually and manages the Gutman Gallery, a fine art gallery and shop located within the footprint of A2 Artoberfest at 118 N. Fourth Ave. Within the gallery, fairgoers can explore more artist-made work as well as the gallery's annual youth art exhibition, Sounds: an all-media youth art exhibition featuring artwork from young Washtenaw County artists grades K–12. The gallery will also host an art-making workshop for all ages from noon to 4 p.m. each day of the fair. ■

# Help us form a Washtenaw Jewish genealogy circle

*By Ruth Kraut and Steve Leber*

Have you been trying t0 learn more about your family history? Interviewing older relatives, searching on JewishGen, Family Search, Ancestry, or other sites? Or maybe you are interested, but you don't know where to begin?

We (Steve Leber and Ruth Kraut) would like to form a Washtenaw Jewish Genealogy Circle. We'll start with a Zoom meeting to discuss future directions.

What, you might wonder, could a Jewish Genealogy Circle do? Three basic ideas come to mind.

## *Help each other and learn from each other*

Perhaps one of us reads Russian and another reads Hebrew — maybe we can translate for each other. Or someone wants to know if it is worth spending the money on one of the commercial genealogy web sites, and others can give a review. There are many resources locally. For instance, let's give a special shout out to the wonderful digital archives of the *Detroit Jewish News,* which is online and free! Or the Bentley Library's Beth Israel collection https://findingaids.lib.umich.edu/catalog/umich-bhl-2017057, which one can go view in person at the University of Michigan Bentley library.

## *Perform service projects*

We could share the history of the Washtenaw County Jewish community with the broader Jewish genealogy community. This could include things like the Beth Israel and Temple Beth Emeth memorial plaques and names and pictures from cemetery gravestones. Resources like this are shared on JewishGen and are of great help to genealogists worldwide.

## *If we're ambitious…*

We could host some speakers and learn about genealogy from other parts of the world.

Does this interest you? If so, you can request to join the Washtenaw Jewish Genealogy Circle Google group by emailing Ruth Kraut at ruthkraut@gmail.com or Steve Leber at smleber@gmail.com to get added to the group listserv. ■

# A new siddur for HDS

*By Lisa Bernstein and Milka Eliav*

Hebrew Day School (HDS) students in grades 3–5 start their day with a song-filled prayer service. The service relies on students' leadership and is a harmonious and calming way to begin the school day. Over the years, HDS has moved from the traditional "Siddurenu" to a colorful, child-friendly siddur (prayer book) that has modern English translations and contains a selection of morning prayers. Neither of these were meeting our current needs and after looking at a great variety of children's siddurim, we found there wasn't a perfect fit in scope and contemporary English.

The meaningful place of the siddur in Jewish life and learning, one of the school's core values, brought us to realize that we needed a siddur that would include most services and prayers rather than a select few, and meet the needs of our pluralistic community. And so, we have decided to create our very own Hebrew Day School Siddur! As two of the school's Judaic and Hebrew studies teachers, we set off to work together and write the translation. The English translation will have non-gendered God language and use vocabulary that is largely accessible to children. And of course, it will remain true to the original language as accurately as possible within those parameters.

The translation work has required careful consideration of each Hebrew word. Should rachamim be rendered as "compassion" or "mercy"? How do we handle gendered Hebrew grammar when creating inclusive English? We've discovered that different siddurim contain textual variations reflecting denominational differences and geographic traditions (nusach).

*HaMorah Milka Eliav during last year's Siddur decoration celebration*

"This project has made me think deeply about the meaning of the prayers, in a way I haven't in a long time," HaMorah Milka notes. "Translating is sometimes interpreting, and we made a real effort to stay as true to the Hebrew words as we could."

The educational value extends beyond language skills: Students participated in weekly "Tefillah Art" sessions led by HaMorah Leah, where they created artwork using a variety of media to convey the kavanah (intent) of the prayers. The students had the opportunity to think deeply about the meaning of the prayers as they created their artwork and to witness firsthand how tefillah art reflects Hebrew Day School's commitment to meaningful Jewish engagement.

Some of the artwork will be included in the new siddur, which we expect to complete for the 2026–2027 school year. The finished siddur will serve our students by developing their understanding of Jewish liturgy and its place in their daily lives.

For more information about Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor or to support the siddur project, contact Development Director Tamar Jacobson at tjacobson@hdsaa.org. ■

*HaMorah Lea (Lisa Bernstein) during morning prayer*

*Yonina continues from pg 1*

appearances in their videos. Known for their inspiring music and soft harmonies, Yonina blends Jewish, Israeli, and international music.

Yonina's musical journey began quite humbly. In 2016, shortly after their marriage, Yoni and Nina began posting weekly music videos from their home in Tzfat, often recording on their balcony with little more than a camera and a guitar. The warmth and authenticity of their performances quickly captured the hearts of viewers, and their fan base grew exponentially. What started as a local project turned into a global phenomenon, as people of all ages and backgrounds connected with their messages of hope, faith, and unity.

Their debut album, *Emet Pshuta* ("Simple Truth"), released in 2017, was met with critical acclaim and fan adoration. Since then, they've toured extensively across Israel, the United States, Europe, and beyond, sharing their music and message with Jewish communities of all stripes.

Ariella and I, along with the rest of our family, saw them perform this spring and were impressed with how they created connection, inspiring their audience to relate to Israel in a new way. Ariella remembers "we were enthralled as they played — we were glued to our seats for the entire performance! When you hear Yonina sing, it transports you to a magical place as their enchanting and beautiful voices work together to weave a powerful melody." They are down-to-earth, real, and honest. Throughout the concert, they also share personal stories and the ideas behind the songs they perform.

Since October 7th their music has become a source of hope, unity, strength, and connection for their followers around the world. The upcoming concert is more than just entertainment — it's a community celebration. Hosted by the Jewish Community Relations Council, Jewish Community Center, the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor, Temple Beth Emeth, and Beth Israel Congregation, the concert is an opportunity to bring together people of all ages and backgrounds for a night of unity through music. Whether you're a longtime fan or hearing them for the first time, Yonina's music offers something for everyone.

This is a special opportunity to come together and celebrate the beauty of Jewish music and spirit. Yonina's message is all about connection — between people, between generations, and between us and our heritage. We're thrilled to welcome them to our community.

Whether you're coming for the music, the message, or the moment, one thing is certain: Yonina's visit to Ann Arbor will be a night to remember. Don't miss this chance to be part of an inspiring, joyful, and truly unforgettable evening.

Timing and ticket reservation details will be forthcoming shortly. We are still soliciting sponsorships and contributions. Please email YoninaComesToAA@gmail.com with questions or to become co-sponsors or contributors. ■

# New programming at the Ann Arbor JCC

*By Marie Pattipati, Director of Cultural Arts and Engagement, Ann Arbor JCC*

For generations, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor (JCC) has been the cornerstone of community life, a place where memories are made and traditions are carried on. As a hub for Jewish culture, education, and connection, we've been the heart of this community's story. Building on our shared success, we're absolutely thrilled to announce an exciting new chapter! Fueled by unprecedented growth and a desire to better serve our thriving community, this new chapter promises to bring even more engaging programming and a deeper connection to the community for everyone.

For the younger members of our community, we are launching a brand-new Dance Series for kids in Pre-K through eighth grade. This series will culminate in a spectacular recital in March, with classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. From our Kindeleh (young kids) Dance Team, which combines creative movement with basic tumbling, to Improv Modern Dance, unlocking your creative expression, and Bolly Kids Dance inspired by Indian dance styles, there's something for every young star ready to shine.

Our new model also focuses on bringing generations together. Many popular family events will be expanded to include programs for kids, adults, and special intergenerational activities, ensuring there's something for every age group.

The heart of this change lies in a direct response to our community's feedback. We've heard your requests to shift some of our weekend events to weekday evenings, and we are acting on them. Recognizing that weekday evening events often attract double or more attendees, we are shifting many of our annual festivals into monthly series. Get ready for a captivating Book Series, an inspiring Arts Series, and a harmonious Music Series. Each will feature large-scale monthly events with notable guest authors, musicians, and artists. The best part? The majority of these will take place on Thursday evenings between 6 and 8 p.m., making it easier for everyone to attend.

This change is a direct result of our community's immense success. Our events are now consistently reaching record numbers. This exciting growth has paved the way for more than just a new schedule. Beyond the monthly series, we are introducing a robust schedule of programs offered throughout the day and evening. Adults can dive into a weekly Book Club to discuss the Jewish Book Series book of the month, or get creative with Fiber Arts Club. New classes like high-energy Bollyfit dance and empowering beginner's self-defense are also on the horizon.

To help our community navigate this exciting new landscape, our brand-new JCC Annual Calendar is now available for purchase at the front desk. It is a beautiful Hebrew/Gregorian calendar that features the work of local artists.

As part of a larger, community-wide collaboration, event information and registration are also being streamlined. The new Ann Arbor Jlive.app is a user-friendly platform, available on your computer or as an app, that serves as a single resource for all Jewish events in Ann Arbor.

These changes are not just about new programs: they represent a significant step toward the JCC's 2030 vision of expansion. This community-wide initiative, with full details available on the JCC website, will ensure Ann Arbor has a vibrant central hub for Jewish life, meeting the growing needs of all its organizations and members. It's an exciting new chapter, and everyone is invited to be part of the story. ■

# "Patrons of the JCC" expands

*Marci Sturman, JCC, Director of Development*

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor is proud to announce the continued growth of Patrons of the JCC, a program that plays a vital role in ensuring that Jewish life in Ann Arbor thrives today and for generations to come.

Patrons of the JCC brings together a group of donors who believe in sustaining a strong and vibrant Jewish community. This year, the program has expanded to include new giving levels that reflect the JCC's growing vision and commitment to serving the community.

## *What's New in 2025*

**Program Renamed:**

Formerly known as Patrons of the Arts, the program has been renamed Patrons of the JCC to reflect the growth and expansion in programming that it supports.

**Special Offer for First-Time Patrons:**

New donors can join Patrons of the JCC at a reduced entry level of $1,000, an invitation to start their journey of impact while enjoying all the recognition and benefits of Patron participation.

**Expanded Patron Levels:**

Donors now have more ways to engage and support, with new levels that build on the success of the program's foundation.

**Enhanced Recognition:**

Patrons receive recognition at programs, on the website, and on a banner displayed at JCC programs and in the lobby highlighting their generous support.

**Special Experiences:**

Exclusive invitations to Amster Gallery openings and Sponsor Nights remain a hallmark of Patron participation, offering meaningful ways to connect with fellow supporters and celebrate Jewish arts and culture.

Patron support directly fuels the JCC's ability to grow its programming.

In 2025, the JCC is especially excited to continue its expansion of a new Music Series, which brings high-quality live performances highlighting diverse Jewish and global traditions to audiences of all ages.

The Book Series, previously held in a two-week block (known as the Jewish Book Festival), will now be offered monthly, bringing programming, rich with distinguished authors, throughout the year.

Cultural events have also expanded significantly, with expanded offerings and strengthened partnerships across the community, providing even more opportunities for engagement and celebration of Jewish and global culture.

"Becoming a Patron is more than a gift — it's an investment in the future of our community," says Dave Stone, Executive Director of the JCC. "The growth of Patrons of the JCC shows the depth of commitment that exists in Ann Arbor to ensure Jewish life is strong, diverse, and welcoming."

The Patrons of the JCC initiative has already demonstrated remarkable impact, supporting excellence in our arts and cultural programming. As the program grows, so does the JCC's capacity to expand offerings like the Music and Book Series, foster connections, and serve families, individuals, and seniors across all stages of life.

With much appreciation, the JCC extends heartfelt thanks to current Patrons and warmly welcomes new supporters to join this year.

Please visit the JCC website (www.jccannarbor.org) or contact Marci Sturman, Director of Development at the JCC, at marcisturman@jccannarbor.org, for more information about the Patrons of the JCC and other giving opportunities. ■

# October events at Beth Israel

Everyone is welcome to join Beth Israel for services, classes, and events. Services are being held in person and virtually, unless otherwise noted on the calendar. Below is a list of the links to participate virtually in services at Beth Israel. Beth Israel is live streaming services on the Beth Israel YouTube channel (Beth Israel Congregation AA MI). All links are also available on the Beth Israel homepage (www.bethisrael-aa.org). Please note that passwords are used. Contact the office to get the passwords at office@bethisrael-aa.org.

## *Adult Hebrew Classes at Beth Israel Congregation*

**Tuesdays, October 21–December 9**

Classes are taught by Milka Eliav and held in the upper level of the G & S 2010 Building. The cost is $160 for members and $220 for non-members. Contact Melanie Gorman with any questions at mgorman@bethisrael-aa.org. Please register on the Beth Israel website (bethisrael-aa.org) by October 14. There four classes to choose from:

**Introductory Hebrew: 5–6:15 p.m.**

This is the class for complete beginners with no prior knowledge. Learn letters and vowels and how to put them together and read aloud. Gain an understanding of how Hebrew differs from English and how it works. Gain some basic vocabulary and build confidence in our approach to Hebrew. *If you have any experience, you should sign up for Prayer Book Reading (not this class).

**Prayer Book Reading: 6:30–7:15 p.m.**

If you can read Hebrew and want to improve your fluency, speed, and confidence, this is the class for you! We will focus on texts from the prayer book and the Jewish Bible, dedicate some class time to discussing meaning and recurring vocabulary, and learn some reading principles to help with fluency and pronunciation. We will use the book *Prayer Book Hebrew, The Easy Way*.

**Beginning Conversation: 7:30–8:15 p.m.**

This class offers a taste of modern Hebrew for communication. Reading Hebrew is a plus but not a requirement. We will jump right into Hebrew and learn to introduce ourselves, ask questions, describe things like our families and jobs, and other common topics. We may even learn to order in an Israeli restaurant. Come dip your toes in this modern-ancient language and roll some Hebrew off your tongue!

**Advanced Conversation: 8:30–9:15 p.m.**

If you can carry on a conversation in Hebrew on various topics, this class is for you. Come join a relaxed and welcoming hour of Hebrew only. Participants talk and read together about a wide range of subjects, while highlighting grammatical points, enriching vocabulary, and exploring cultural references. "Hebrew Table" at its best!

## *Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah at Beth Israel*

Sukkot Morning Services: Tuesday, October 7, and Wednesday, October 8, at 9:30 a.m.

***Israel Symphony Orchestra Rishon Lezion string trio***

Shemini Atzeret Morning Service: Tuesday, October 14, at 9:30 a.m.

Simchat Torah Celebration: Tuesday, October 14, at 6:30 p.m.

Simchat Torah Morning Service: Wednesday, October 15, at 9 a.m., followed by a light brunch at 9:30 a.m. and the Torah Service and Hakafot at 10 a.m.

**Brunch in the Booth**

Sunday, October 12, at 11 a.m.

Join us for brunch in the sukkah and festive Sukkot fun for the whole family. Brunch served for all. We will have tables in the sukkah for adults and a bounce house in the backyard for families. Be sure to register on the BIC website so that we will know how many to provide brunch for.

**The Hidden Meaning of Shemini Atzeret with Rabbi Professor Elliot Ginsburg**

Sunday, October 12, at 2 p.m. in the sukkah

Rabbi Ginsburg is a scholar and practitioner of Jewish mysticism and Hasidut, bringing experiential learning to his classes. With a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania and a distinguished career as an Associate Professor of Jewish Thought at the University of Michigan, Rabbi Ginsburg is renowned for his groundbreaking research on the mystical celebration of Sabbath in classical Kabbalah. Through his engaging lectures and critical commentary, Rabbi Ginsburg invites students to explore the profound teachings of Jewish mysticism and discover new depths of spiritual insight.

**Simchat Torah Family Service and Program**

Tuesday, October 14, at 6:30 p.m.

We're celebrating the Torah with a family-friendly service featuring Neil Alexander and his band, the unrolling of the Torah scroll, dancing Hakafot, prizes for kids, and refreshments for all.

**Advanced Intro to Judaism**

Sunday, October 19, at 1 p.m.

This year, Rabbi Caine is opening his popular "Intro to Judaism" course to Jews and the Jew-curious alike. Whether you're considering identifying with the Jewish people and wish to know more, or you have Jewish family and want to learn more, or perhaps you are already Jewish but either never went to "Hebrew School" or did but realize you only got the kid version!

This biweekly course is for adults who are looking to learn anew or deepen their knowledge of the history, meanings, theologies, and practices of Judaism. What does it mean to read the Torah as an adult, develop a relationship with God and Jewish practices as an adult, see the world through a Jewish lens?

Weekly topics include "From Shepherds to Jews," "How to Do Torah Study as an Adult," "Kabbalah and God," "How the Jewish Prayer service really works," "The History of the Israel-Arab Conflict," "How to Mourn as a Jew," and more!

**ISRAEL360 Presents: Israel Symphony Orchestra Rishon Lezion String Trio Classical and Jewish Concert**

Wednesday, October 22, at 7 p.m.

Join us for a special evening of classical and Jewish music by Schubert, Beethoven, and Gideon Klein, as well as traditional Israeli and Jewish songs. A dessert reception and meet and greet will follow the concert. Adult tickets are $25 and children's tickets (13 & under) are $10. Tickets may be purchased in advance at bethisrael-aa.org. All ticket sales go directly to the ISO musicians to offset reductions in government funding since October 7th. This concert is co-sponsored by Beth Israel Congregation, The Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor, The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, and Temple Beth Emeth.

**Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin via Zoom**

Mondays at 4 p.m.

The class meets on Zoom on Monday afternoons from 4–5:15. We will read the text in the original Hebrew or Aramaic with an accompanying English translation and discuss the text in English. No familiarity with Hebrew or prior experience studying Talmud is required. This fall, we will continue our study of sections from the tractate Megillah, which includes some fascinating commentaries on the book of Esther, discussions on the reading of the Megillah and other sacred texts, and the observance of the holiday of Purim. All are welcome!

**Shabbat Limmud with Rabbi Dobrusin**

Saturday, October 18, at 9 a.m.

Shabbat Limmud is an opportunity for informal and lively discussion on the Torah portion of the week, over coffee and cake. We meet in the Beth Israel library before Shabbat morning services at 9 a.m. and will conclude at 9:45. Rabbi Dobrusin will facilitate the discussion and all texts will be provided. We invite you to join us for a stimulating start to Shabbat morning!

**Theology Book Club: Online**

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Beth Israel Congregation's Theology Book Club welcomes you to join them to read together and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. The books are in English. Contact Paul Shifrin at (248) 514-7276 for more information.

**Aura of Kabbalat Shabbat**

Friday, October 17, at 6 p.m.

A Jewish Renewal-inspired singing service led by Rabbi Aura Ahuvia. The choir, dubbed the "Holy Levites," will be holding a rehearsal at 5:30 p.m. leading right up to and seamlessly into services. All are welcome to attend.

**Tot Shabbat**

Saturday, October 11 and 25, at 11 a.m.

Join us for a playful morning of Jewish songs and stories. Challah and grape juice kiddush included. For kids age one through first grade and parents, but all are welcome.

**Mini Minyan**

Saturday, October 11, at 11 a.m.

Calling all 7–10-year-olds for Mini Minyan! Join us monthly for a Saturday morning service and kiddush.

## *Yom Kippur at Beth Israel Congregation*

See the website for complete details on service times and tickets. (www.bethisrael-aa.org)

Wednesday, October 1: Kol Nidrei
7 p.m. Kol Nidrei Services
7 p.m. Teen Discussion
9 p.m. (approx.) An Opportunity for Meditation with Sandra Finkel

Thursday, October 2: Yom Kippur
8:30 a.m. Morning Services
10 a.m. Childcare and Youth Programs
4 p.m. Group Discussion
5:30 p.m. Minchah & Neilah
8:00 p.m. Break the Fast

## *In Person and Online Services*

**Minyan**

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the M&M Chapel and online

Sundays–Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. online only

**Friday Evening Services: in person and virtual**

Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 6 p.m.

**Shabbat Morning Services: in person and virtual**

Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. ■

# Nova survivor Maya Izoutcheev at October 7 commemoration

*By Amichay Findling, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor*

On Thursday, October 16, in commemoration of the October 7 massacre, the Ann Arbor area Jewish community will gather to remember the horror of that day two years ago — not with empty words, but with testimony, reflective music, and art aimed at remembrance. This year's commemoration will feature Maya Izoutcheev, a survivor of the Nova Festival massacre, whose story is wrenching, vivid, and full of courage.

The program will be held at the JCC of Greater Ann Arbor at 6:30 p.m. and is a collaboration between the Jewish Federation, the Jewish Community Center, Hebrew Day School, many local congregations, and additional community organizations. The event is open to all. Security will be provided.

Maya Izoutcheev was at the Nova Music Festival, a gathering on October 7, 2023, that was intended to celebrate peace. What she witnessed that day was anything but peaceful. In the chaos of indiscriminate violence, Maya lost friends, saw people she knew fall, and endured moments that no person should ever experience. She has shared publicly how the terror was immediate and unpredictable — and how surviving does not erase the scars or sense of disbelief. She has said that she now knows how her world shifted forever in an instant. Her survival is not a simple tale of escape; it is a story of trauma, loss, endurance, and of trying to live again in the aftermath.

Maya will bring the immediacy of her story to Ann Arbor so that the community has the opportunity to do more than mourn together: attendees will learn and gain a deeper understanding of what was lost and how to move through it. Forgetting or distancing oneself can be easier, but, while remembering traumatic events is painful, it can be necessary to healing.

The evening will include local cantors and musicians whose music carries memory, with songs and melodies that reflect both grief and resolve. Rabbis from Ann Arbor's congregations will offer reflections not just on the broader meaning of October 7 in Israel and what it has meant for Jews worldwide, but also on how this attack has affected the local community: the fear, the solidarity, the coming together, as well as the new threats and deepened political divides.

***Nova Festival Survivor Maya Izoutcheev will share her story with the Ann Arbor area community at the commemoration on 10/16.***

Part of the event will be a community art project, led by Marie Patipatti, Arts & Culture Director at the Ann Arbor JCC. All participants will have space to contribute to this hands-on therapeutic art project, expressing what words cannot. The project will serve as a collective memorial: not just framed or hung, but built together by many hands and voices, each act of creation an act of remembering. Local artists will also present their work that reflects on Maya's story of October 7 during the event.

During the event, Maya will share her experience of October 7. When she speaks, she will carry not only her own story but the stories of those who did not survive, of those who are still struggling, and of all those whose lives, in Israel and elsewhere, have been touched by October 7. Her story demands that witnesses see, that community holds onto truth, and that memory is not passive.

For a deeper dive into Maya's story and opportunity for more intimate connection, the Jewish Federation will coordinate conversations with Maya in various Ann Arbor community institutions in the weekend around the event.

Advance registration will be required at JLive.app. Visit JLive, Ann Arbor's newest hub for events in the Jewish community, or subscribe to Federation's email newsletters at JewishAnnArbor.org for more details. ■

# Dr. Andrea Gondos: Studying the spread of Jewish mysticism

The Frankel Center is pleased to welcome the new Padnos Family Professor in Jewish Thought, Dr. Andrea Gondos, to our esteemed faculty this fall. To introduce the newest member of our community, we asked Gondos a few questions about her career and ongoing research. We hope you enjoy this fascinating interview!

**Frankel Center:** How did you first become interested in researching Jewish mysticism?

**Andrea Gondos:** The occult, the mystical dynamics of the seen and unseen worlds, has always fascinated me, and when I decided to do my graduate education in Jewish studies, Kabbalah — or Jewish mysticism — became almost immediately my chosen area of focus. My doctoral project probed questions of book history, the technological innovation of print, and new ways of reading Jewish mystical sources. As a technological and material innovation, print made broad dissemination of Jewish esoteric ideas possible and accessible through the production of digests, anthologies, and vernacular complications that could be produced at a significantly lower cost than manuscripts. The 16th-century printing of medieval kabbalistic works, such as the Sefer ha-Zohar (Book of Splendor), along with other kabbalistic classics, reflected the growing demand not only within early modern Jewish society, but also by an emerging Christian readership, interested in the teachings and ideas of Kabbalah. At the same time, printing could only partially open this corpus of esoteric knowledge, with its idiosyncratic language, mythology, and religious symbolism. New Jewish authors, who frequently worked as educators in the Jewish community, seized this unique cultural opportunity to develop literary and conceptual solutions that helped readers navigate the challenges of these esoteric texts. In my doctoral work I was profoundly interested in understanding knowledge organization and transmission through the test case of Kabbalah, or Jewish mysticism.

**FC:** What's your favorite thing about studying mystical Judaism?

**AG:** In the Jewish tradition, the Torah has frequently been compared to water, underscoring both its propensity to nourish and its endlessness, particularly as ocean or sea, symbolizing the vast possibilities of interpretation it can generate. When discussing the splitting of the Red Sea during the Exodus, the medieval mystical classic, the Zohar, remarks that the Torah, like the sea, has both a revealed and a hidden facet. During the Exodus, the natural separation between the hidden and revealed aspects was removed, allowing the Israelites to glimpse the secrets of the heavenly world that are normally left concealed from human consciousness. My favorite thing about studying Judaism, particularly its mystical dimensions, is to have moments,

*Dr. Andrea Gondos*

however rare, when I find such moments of "glimpsing" and boundary dissolution. This happens often when I am engaged in textual interpretation, meditation, or — and this is the most rewarding — through intense study with students and colleagues. Another rewarding side of studying medieval and early modern Kabbalah is losing oneself in the world of manuscripts. Many of these texts have never been printed or studied before, and some contain intricate diagrams. Spending time with these unique artifacts in libraries worldwide, exploring the scribe's annotations, his unique way of forming letters, and the materiality of the paper or parchment on which these works received their final shape, present enduring sources of intellectual reward for me.

**FC:** Why did you choose to come to the University of Michigan?

**AG:** The University of Michigan is an outstanding university with a reputation for global leadership and research excellence, and the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies within the broader university community constitutes a leading academic hub for the study of the Jewish past, life, tradition, and practice. In coming to the University of Michigan, I was particularly excited about joining a globally leading institution with a diverse and large student body, while at the same time becoming part of a distinguished team of Judaic studies scholars. On a more personal note, and parallel to my daily academic track, I am eager to discover the region's abundant waterways, green fields, forests, and national parks, and to contribute to Ann Arbor's lively and diverse community!

**FC:** Why do you think it is important to study Kabbalah?

**AG:** Over the past decade or so, the humanities have been increasingly marginalized and forced to retreat in universities. However, if we survey the history of universities, from the Middle Ages onward, educational curricula always revolved around achieving a balance between the liberal arts, represented by the fields of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and the more exact sciences, such as mathematics, geometry, astronomy, and surprisingly, music. The study of Kabbalah or Jewish esotericism falls squarely into the area of the receding humanities. However, what many do not realize is that Kabbalah, in both its theoretical and practical aspects, intersects with numerous cognate fields: Bible commentary, rabbinic midrash, philosophy, philology, Christian Hebraism, medicine, and sometimes even science and technology. The history of Jewish mysticism is not a marginal phenomenon but has constituted for centuries a vital and frequently a revitalizing aspect of the Jewish tradition. Kabbalists throughout history were also important communal leaders and worked as physicians or judges in Jewish society. Studying Kabbalah opens vistas for a renewed understanding of core Jewish texts and practices while also contributing to a broader interdisciplinary discourse.

**FC:** Why do you think Judaic studies/humanities in general are important?

**AG:** Let me answer this question with a flashback to my undergraduate commencement. The faculty valedictorian at the ceremony, a professor of English literature with whom I took several classes, framed the importance of the humanities by asking the audience to imagine becoming castaways following a shipwreck with nothing more than a small boat, two or three companions, and a bit of food and water. As this small group of desperate stranded individuals awaits rescue, they each begin telling a story. The stories and the storytelling nurture their sense of hope and keep them strong until help arrives. Ultimately, the humanities are the repositories of the stories of humankind — through them we can understand our past, adapt and change existing discourses and paradigms, and shape a better and more wholesome future. Within universal human history, the Jewish past occupies a special place of study, offering enduring solutions to pressing questions from Biblical to contemporary times. For instance, the ancient rabbinic text, the Talmud, has already grappled with perennial issues such as the relationship between humankind and the universe including the natural world populated by plants, trees, herbs, and animals. The Talmud repeatedly emphasizes the holistic and enmeshed nature of existence, stressing the role of human responsibility in caring for the created world, whether this entails providing food for animals before feeding ourselves or not killing a bird with its young.

**FC:** How has your work evolved since you first started your career?

**AG:** My doctoral dissertation and first postdoctoral appointment delved into the question of how Kabbalah was popularized in the 16th and early 17th centuries, shortly after the printing of medieval kabbalistic classics for the first time in 16th-century Italy. I was particularly interested in uncovering how print technology impacted the circulation, study, and absorption of Jewish mystical lore. During my postdoctoral tenure at the Free University in Berlin, I was part of a research group that examined and critically analyzed Jewish magic and practical Kabbalah preserved in over 100 manuscripts written in East-Central Europe between 1550 and 1850. This research project shifted my research trajectory and brought me into contact with the rich and frequently syncretistic world of Jewish magic, healing, and medicine. Within the broader project, I developed a unique focus on women, issues of (in)fertility, and magical or medical techniques that addressed this problem. I have published several articles from this project, and am currently writing a book based on my research findings.

**FC:** What courses do you teach and what do you want them to take away from them?

**AG:** In the fall, I am excited to teach a course titled, "Jewish Spirituality in Movies, Music, and Pop Culture," which will explore the ways in which pop culture has absorbed and popularized the ideas, symbols, and practices of premodern Jewish mysticism on a global scale. In the winter term, I plan to offer a course on the concepts of death and afterlife in Judaism, tentatively titled, "Jewish Horror: Death, Reincarnation, and the Afterlife in Judaism," and another class focused on the wide-ranging attitudes Jews have propagated toward the body, health, and medicine from the Bible to premodern times, tentatively called, "Medicine, Magic, and the Jewish Body."

**FC:** What is going to be your next project?

**AG:** I am currently writing a book titled *Chaining Lilith, Healing Eve: Magical and Medical Techniques of Jewish Birth in the East European Shtetl*. The work surveys a vast trove of Jewish how-to manuals/books of secrets, which were written between 1600 to 1850 and preserved today in manuscripts, to illuminate how Jewish male healers managed the (re)generative aspects of the Jewish female body. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, *Chaining Lilith* brings Greek medical theories into conversation with early modern Jewish herbalism, and kabbalistic ideas with magical technologies — amulets, incantations, and spells. The book will shed further light on the now-lost world of Jewish itinerant healers and wonderworkers (ba'alei shem), who offered a counterculture to the dominant rabbinic paradigm in early modern East-Central Europe. Collating and analyzing thousands of recipes for facilitating love and sexual potency, pregnancy, and an easy birth, the book reveals the centrality of women's bodies in constructing and shaping Jewish social and religious ideals in East-Central Europe on the eve of modernity. ■

# Fall this and that

*By Lonnie Sussman*

I started writing this column for the fall and all the holidays in the Hebrew month of Tishrei, but I either lost focus or just couldn't decide what to write. Then I began again with thoughts of the two trips to California I made this summer with two different groups of women friends, one trip to Los Angeles and another to San Francisco and Carmel. I wanted to share some of the recipes from these trips. Then I discarded that idea and began again, this time with the anxiety of knowing there is a lot of cooking for the holidays, and I haven't been able to concentrate enough to make plans a month in advance.

Finally, I settled on a little bit of this and a little bit of that. Bring out the traditional chicken soup, brisket, potato kugel, and apple cake or try something new. I chose a new soup recipe (see below) and a favorite from past years, an apple crisp, and a date cake instead of apple or honey cakes.

While I love tradition, sometimes I just need to make something else. I hope everyone has some meaningful and spiritual inspirations and gets the strength for the next year.

## Hazelnut Soup

Serves 10

I got a recipe for hazelnut soup from one of my friends in California who had some recipes from a cooking class she took years ago. I copied the recipe but lost it somewhere along the way home. I found many soup recipes that are a lot like potato leek soup or any creamy blended soup but add hazelnuts for a slightly different flavor. I added a package of frozen artichoke hearts as well. So, make the soup with changes: if you don't like parsnips add carrots instead, or use both. Maybe you like less onion or less garlic, it's up to you. There are comments in many online recipes that call the soup Rapunzel's Soup, or Tangled Soup, or Walt Disney Hazelnut Soup. I'm not up enough on movies but it seems that the soup was featured in a Disney film, and the name comes from there.

- 3 ½ tbs butter
- 1 bunch of green onions, or a large onion, sliced
- 5 shallots, sliced
- 5 cloves of garlic, minced
- 3 ½ tsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 5 parsnips, peeled and chopped
- 3 pounds of potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 10 cups broth
- 1½ cup hazelnuts, roughly chopped
- 1½ cup half and half
- Salt and pepper to taste

Melt the butter in a large Dutch oven or pot over medium heat, add the chopped onions and shallots and sauté until translucent. Add the garlic, thyme, hazelnuts, salt, and pepper and sauté, stirring, for another 2–3 minutes. Add the parsnips and potatoes and the broth.

Cover the pot and bring the broth to a boil, then reduce to low and simmer for about 20 minutes. When the vegetables are cooked through, remove the heat. When cooled a little, use a blender or food processor or immersion blender to blend to a smooth consistency. Add the half and half and reheat.

## Baked Eggs with Green Mild Chiles

From my friend, Cheryl, who got the recipe from a friend of hers.

Serves 4–6 or maybe more, depending on what else there is to eat.

Cheryl hosted a "sleep over party" during the first friends' trip I took to California. This was breakfast one of the days. It was served along with yogurt, fruit, and toast. It could also be part of Sukkot lunch.

- 10 eggs, very well beaten, best in blender
- ½ cup all-purpose flour or almond flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ stick of butter, melted and then cooled
- 2 oz diced, mild green Hatch chiles (found in cans at Trader Joe's or Ortega brand)
- 2 cups low-fat cottage cheese
- 3 cups grated Monterey Jack and/or cheddar (or the grated cheese of your choice)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare a 9x13 pan and spray with Pam or a little oil or butter on the bottom. Beat the eggs very well or use the blender. Combine the dry ingredients and add to the egg mixture, then add in the cooled butter and blend together. Place in the baking pan. Put the grated cheese and the cottage cheese into a bowl and add the green chiles. Mix them to combine and pour over the eggs. Stir to combine all the ingredients. Bake at 350 degrees for about 40–45 minutes or until the center is firm and the edges are browned.

## Black Bean Burgers

From the Kosher Cowboy, https://kosher-cowboy.com/

Makes 4–8 patties

Here's another possibility for a simple lunch or dinner during the holidays. Spice it up with whatever you like on burgers. Use buns or challah, or, like I do, serve it along with a salad and no bread. There are many recipes for black bean burgers, but I like this one because of the firm texture. The trick is forming the patties and then refrigerating for anywhere from 20 minutes to overnight.

- 1 14.5 oz can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup oats
- ½ cup walnuts
- 1 tbs balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbs olive oil
- 1 tbs Worcestershire sauce (or use tamari sauce)
- 1 tbs maple syrup
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp paprika
- ½ tsp cumin
- 3 scallions, washed and trimmed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Oil to fry

Use a food processor and mince the garlic. Next, add the green onion and process. Then add the walnuts and process again. Finally, add the beans, oats, and remaining ingredients and pulse until the mix has the consistency of ground beef.

Let the mixture rest for 10–15 minutes so the oats can absorb any moisture. Form into 4 large patties or 8 smaller ones. Refrigerate at least 20 minutes or overnight. Bring the skillet to medium heat, grease with oil (I use olive oil, but you can use canola or another neutral tasting oil). Fry for 4–5 minutes, flip, and then fry another 2–3 minutes. You can do the usual condiments like mustard and ketchup or branch out with things like mayonnaise, orange marmalade, and avocado slices.

## Quinoa with Moroccan Winter Squash and Carrot Stew

Adapted from *Bon Appetit*, January 2006

Serves 6

I usually make a butternut squash soup with tart apples for Sukkot, but this sounds like a nice fall main dish instead. Maybe we will skip the soup for this meal and concentrate on dessert

**For the stew**

- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tsp sweet paprika
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp of each of the following spices: pepper, ground coriander, ground cumin, turmeric, ground ginger, cayenne pepper (optional)
- Pinch of saffron
- 1 cup water
- 1 14-oz can diced tomatoes, drained
- 2 tbs fresh lemon juice
- 3 cups peeled butternut squash cut into 1-inch cubes (from about a 1½ pound squash)
- 2 cups peeled carrots, cut into ¾ inch cubes

**For the Quinoa**

- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 tbs butter or vegan butter
- 1 tbs olive oil
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ¼ cup finely chopped peeled carrot
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp each of salt and turmeric
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro (or parsley), divided
- 2 tsp fresh mint, chopped and divided

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and sauté until soft, stirring often, for about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and stir for about another minute. Mix in the paprika and the other spices. Add 1 cup water, tomatoes, and the lemon juice and bring to a boil. Add in the squash and carrots and cover. Simmer over medium-low heat until the vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. You can make this the day before. Cover and chill.

Rinse the quinoa and drain. Melt the butter (or vegan substitute) with the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and carrot and cover to cook until the vegetables begin to brown. This should take about 10 minutes, but stir often. Add the seasonings and stir for about a minute, then add the quinoa and stir again for a minute. Add the 2 cups of water, bring to boil, then reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and simmer until the liquid is absorbed and the quinoa tender. This should take about 15 minutes.

To serve, rewarm the stew and stir in half of the cilantro and half of the mint. (I know, lots of people can't or won't eat the cilantro). Spoon the quinoa onto a large serving platter and forming a well in the center.

Spoon the stew into the well and sprinkle the remaining herbs over.

## Pumpkin Kibbeh

From The Nosher, www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher

Serves 4–6

Kibbeh is a traditional Middle Eastern dish, typically made with spiced meat. It's like a mini meat pie. This version is vegetarian. Check out the directions because you can make this into a casserole or smaller stuffed balls (think large falafel size).)

**For the shell**

- 1½ cups bulgur wheat, preferably finely ground
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp Baharat seasoning (you can get at By the Pound or an Arab market), or use allspice instead
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup canned pumpkin (not pumpkin pie)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour

**For the Filling**

- 2 tbs tomato paste
- 2 tbs extra virgin olive oil
- 24 oz baby bella mushrooms, chopped very fine, or use a food processor
- 1 medium onion, chopped very fine (or use the food processor again)
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ tsp Baharat or allspice
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ½ cup black lentils (or brown or French lentils)

- 3 tbs vegetable oil for the bottom of the casserole or on the parchment paper if you are baking the football shaped kibbeh.

- Pine nuts for garnish

Start by making the kibbeh dough. Use a large bowl and combine the bulgur wheat and boiling water, cover it with a plate, and let it sit for 20 minutes. Add the salt, Baharat, cinnamon, and pumpkin, and mix

*Continued on page 11*

*Kosher Cuisine continues from page 10*

well. Add in the flour and mix well to form a wet dough. Make the filling in a smaller bowl by whisking the olive oil and tomato paste very well, and transfer it to a large skillet to cook over medium heat for 3–5 minutes. You want the mixture to look dark red, but keep stirring so it doesn't burn. Add the chopped onions and mushrooms to the skillet and mix well until well coated. Add in the spices (salt, Baharat or allspice, and cinnamon). Cook over medium heat for about 20 minutes or until the mushrooms are mostly dried. In the meantime, place the lentils in a small pot with 4 cups of water and ½ tsp salt. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to medium, cover, and cook for about 30 minutes or until the lentils are cooked but not mushy. Combine the lentils and mushroom mixture in a big bowl and mix well. Set aside to cool.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Drizzle 1 tbs vegetable oil at the bottom of a 11x7x3 baking dish and spread it evenly over the entire dish. Use half of the kibbeh dough on the bottom of the dish and prick it all over with a fork. Then spread the filling evenly on the top. Divide the remaining dough into 10–12 balls. Gently flatten each one with your hands and place them on top of the filling until it's completely covered. Score the top dough to make

a diamond pattern and garnish each diamond with a pinenut. Drizzle the remaining 2 tbs vegetable oil on the top and bake at 375 degrees for 45 minutes.

Alternate to the casserole style is to take about 2 tbs of the dough and form an oval or football shape, leaving a space in the middle for some of the mushroom mixture. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and use half the vegetable oil on top of the parchment paper. Place the stuffed kibbeh on the tray and bake at 400 degrees for about 5–10 minutes per side or until the dough is golden brown. Some recipes call for frying the kibbeh in a pan instead./ ■

*Restaurant review continues from pg 3*

smell the freshly toasted warm nuts and olive oil. We asked our server for some pita to go with it, and he said he would bring it, but it was not usually served with the dish because there is pita inside. Sure enough, when we spooned the dish onto our plates we could see small bits of pita that added texture. Humble food made luxurious never ceases to amaze.

The portions are generous and the prices are extremely reasonable, making it easy to share and try multiple dishes. The bill for all of this food was $67 before adding a gratuity and we brought home a lot of leftovers. Visit The Olive Branch, bring your friends, and have an affordable feast. We recommend stepping off the beaten path and ordering adventurously. They don't serve dessert, though they have a wide variety of smoothies, fresh juices, and Middle Eastern sodas for your sweet tooth. The service was a bit rough around the edges but friendly and helpful answering our questions. The next day, our teenage tester loaded up his plate with leftovers and warmed it up, and then "mmmm" was heard coming from the kitchen. He approved, too.

There is something poetic and hopeful about a restaurant named "The Olive Branch" in the current climate. We can only hope that one day soon the olive branch will be extended and accepted. In the meantime, it stands for excellent Palestinian food.

**The Olive Branch**

**2269 Ellsworth, Ypsilanti**

**734.961.7452**

**https://www.theolivebranch-restaurant.com/** ■

LSA JEAN & SAMUEL FRANKEL CENTER FOR JUDAIC STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

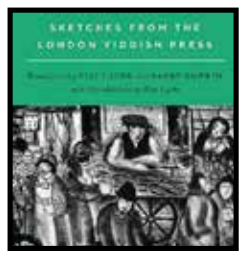
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Visit **lsa.umich.edu/judaic** for more information

**The Great Yiddish Parade: Culture, Activism, and Song**

*Guest Speaker: Vivi Lachs (pictured)*

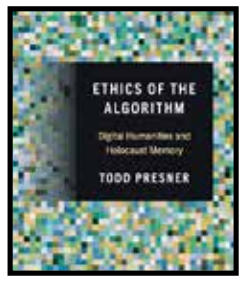
**Tuesday, October 21** | 5 - 6:30 PM
**Room 2022, South Thayer Building**
A student-focused workshop for anyone interested in the Yiddish language!




**Transnational Yiddish Press: A Roundtable Discussion**

*Guest Speaker: Vivi Lachs*

**Thursday, October 23** | 5 :30 - 7 PM
**Room 2022, South Thayer Building**
A scholarly discussion of transnational Yiddish print media and Lach's book, *East End Jews: Sketches from the London Yiddish Press.*




**The Media of Holocaust Memory**

*Guest Speakers: Laura Levitt & Todd Presner*

**Tuesday, November 11** | 4:00 - 5:30 PM
**Room 2022, South Thayer Building**
Two leading Holocaust scholars discuss the role of "high tech" computer algorithms and AI and "low tech" monuments and material artifacts as technologies for memorializing.

We are pleased to provide reasonable accommodations to enable full participation in this event. Please contact js-event-coord@umich.edu to request disability accommodations or with any questions/concerns.



2025 Wallenberg Medal and Lecture

"Free People in an Unfree Country: Standing Up to Kremlin Tyranny, Past and Present"

Vladimir Kara-Murza

Russian politician, author, historian, and former political prisoner

Tuesday, November 4, 2025, 4:30PM
Rackham Auditorium
915 East Washington St., Ann Arbor

WALLENBERG LEGACY MEDAL & LECTURE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

# Feature

*Nicaragua continued from pg 1*

**Chaim (center) with the community in Teustepe. The donated items on the table.**

eled to Latin America many times to study, volunteer, and immerse myself in the culture. In the U.S., I worked eight years as a Spanish interpreter. During this trip, my two worlds came together.

My first exposure to Nicaragua was in 2011, when I went for a short Peace Corps-like experience and ended up founding a literacy nonprofit, CREA (creanicaragua.org), with expat friends. When CREA scheduled meetings in Nicaragua this summer, I decided to use the opportunity to visit the Jewish community there.

## *Setting the scene*

At its peak in 1972, Nicaragua's Jewish community was estimated at 250, including many Jews who came from Europe before and after World War II. They were mostly farmers, manufacturers, and retailers, and even owned the two largest department stores in the capital of Managua.

The Jews of Nicaragua prospered. Their synagogue, the Congregacion Israelita de Nicaragua, served as a social center, and they had both B'nai B'rith and WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization) chapters. Their children attended the private American Nicaraguan School and were sent to Miami for the summer. But then things went awry.

In 1972, an earthquake decimated 90% of Managua. This was followed by the Sandinista's socialist revolution in 1979, which overthrew three generations of dictatorship by the Somoza family.

The Jews faced hostility, perhaps because of resentment of their economic success, perhaps because the community was linked to Israeli arms sales to the dictatorship. Many fled. Property was seized. Their synagogue was firebombed and later expropriated.

At the low point, there may have been fewer than a dozen Jews left in Nicaragua. Some returned after the Sandinistas lost the election in 1990. They were later joined by about 140 converts, including 114 converted by rabbis sent by Kulanu in 2017. Many converts claimed Jewish ancestry. Some Jewish American retirees joined the mix, attracted by the tropical climate and low cost of living.

As I planned my visit, I learned they had recently suffered a major setback. The congregation used to meet in the hotel owned by its president, Kurt Preiss. But when Preiss died in 2022, unbeknownst to the congregation, his widow sold all the Jewish items, including their Torah, to pay off his medical bills.

In addition to losing Preiss' financial support, the synagogue had its legal status revoked in August 2024.

It was into this scene that I arrived on July 30 with two suitcases. Packed among my clothes were 11 siddurs, a Shulchan Aruch (Code of Jewish Law), two Five Books of Moses, two Books of Psalms, a Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers), 21 mezuzahs, 17 tallits, 45 yarmulkas, seven seder plates, and an assortment of candlesticks, kiddush cups, menorahs, and candles. And a shofar!

Going through Nicaraguan customs, I was nervous. Images flashed through my mind of the Jews who smuggled Judaica into the Soviet Union in the 1980s.

The young customs agent pawed through the suitcases. "They're all donations," I said. "Religious items." He glanced over at a woman, perhaps his supervisor. She looked at the Hebrew books he held in his hands, then away. Perhaps not worth the trouble of filling out the paperwork? I stuffed everything back into my suitcases and walked away, relieved.

## *Meeting the Nicaraguan Jews*

One of the two groups I met with is led by a couple in their late 40s, Keren Yocheved, and her husband Meir. Sensitive to the political situation, they requested that I use only their Hebrew first names in this article. At first, they seemed cautious, but as we talked, they slowly opened up.

Meir wore a black yarmulka and a Star of David on a chain around his neck. I wondered how it was for him to wear that identity so openly.

They seemed well-integrated in Nicaraguan society. Keren is a doctor and received several medical calls while we were together. Meir has a degree in economics and works in computer systems support.

They have been married 26 years and had a Jewish wedding in 2015, which is common after couples formally convert to Judaism.

They have a daughter, Rivka Sarai, who will graduate from medical school soon. She traveled to Israel in 2017 to participate in the Maccabi Games. Their son Israel Meir is in high school and also wants to pursue medicine.

Meir has studied Talmud daily for many years through the online Daf Yomi program. In 2017, he traveled to Israel for an interfaith gathering. He found the experience "profoundly transformative" because it allowed him to reconnect with his roots.

Their group has about 30 members, and they dream of having their own Torah and a place to pray and celebrate together.

In one of the most striking moments of the visit, Meir walked into a courtyard with the shofar that had been sent by Beth Israel. Incongruously, surrounded by dense jungle, he began to blow the shofar … and was immediately answered by a chorus of a dozen dogs! Meir had learned to play the shofar from YouTube.

Not long after our visit, Keren wrote to tell me that their group had met. They adopted the name Beit Shalom. Because it is a "mixed group," meaning they follow various traditions, they decided that every member could practice in a way that felt comfortable. They also agreed to celebrate Rosh Hashanah together.

They were very appreciative of the donated items, which can be difficult to acquire there.

In a subsequent thank-you letter to donors, Keren said, "For our community, these resources are much more than objects: they are symbols of connection, identity, hope, and continuity."

I met next with Alfonso Fried, a retired lawyer in his sixties. He was friendly and warm. His wife Jeaneth was shy. Chaim, as he likes to be called, is proud of his Jewish heritage, and he did not hesitate to have his full name appear in an article.

Jeaneth converted through Kulanu, and this couple also had a Jewish wedding. Chaim's son Siegfried converted with Kulanu in New York before traveling on to Israel in 2017 for the Maccabi Games.

Since the Congregacion Israelita synagogue closed, Chaim and his wife have practiced their Judaism mostly at home. Though not members, they are on friendly terms with four groups, totaling about 90 members, whose observance ranges from Conservative to ultra-Orthodox. They are not in contact with a fifth Jewish group.

Chaim showed me photos of the Jewish cemetery in Managua, which has 50 Jewish graves. "My father Adolfo Fried, a Hungarian Jew who survived the Holocaust, is buried there."

Chaim likes to study colonial and Jewish history.

"The period with the most organized Jewish presence here was between the '50s and '70s," he said. Of the 250 Jewish families, he estimates that only about 25–30 people remain. They can be identified by their Eastern European surnames.

The history of the Sephardic Jews is more complex, he said. They arrived at the beginning of the Spanish Colonial period in the 1500s and were unable to openly follow Jewish practices, much less build a synagogue or Jewish cemetery. Their Spanish surnames are less identifiable as Jewish. Though it cannot be proved scientifically, Chaim believes over half of the Nicaraguan population probably has some Sephardic Jewish blood.

***continues to pg 13***

*Nicaragua continued from pg 12*

**Alfonso "Chaim" Fried. Also pictured are his wife Jeaneth and Steve Merritt (right).**

### *Final thoughts*

I was struck by how different Nicaraguan Jews are from American Jews. A high percentage of American Jews consider themselves Jewish mainly by ancestry or culture but don't engage in religious practices or institutions. In contrast, the interest of these couples in Judaism had a palpable intensity. This was something they really wanted. It made me think of the Jews throughout history who risked death for their faith.

Shortly before Keren and Meir left, I commented that their situation reminded me of the play *The Fiddler on the Roof,* with which they were familiar. And they agreed, life for Jews in Nicaragua can be precarious.

And that is what impressed me most from my visit with these Nicaraguan Jews: their strong desire, despite the challenges and risks, to hold onto their Jewish identity and community. And their sincere appreciation of our support. ■

## The first story of humanity

*By Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Chabad of Ann Arbor*

### *Rabbi Goldstein*

The Shabbat of October 18, the first after the conclusion of the Festivals, we begin the new cycle of reading the Torah with the very first section of the book of Genesis — Bereishit. This week's portion, Bereishit, tells of the six days of creation, culminating with G-d's creation of the first people, Adam and Eve. One of the first episodes that we read is the story is of the cunning deceit of the snake, who attempts to convince both Adam and Chava to go against G-d's will.

It seems that this is the beginning of all of humanity's troubles. It is also replayed over and over again in every generation. The cunning deceive the world to go against truth and decency, to go against G-d.

Why is this the first story of humanity? What lesson can we take from this for ourselves and for our time?

This story is our personal daily struggle with the snake, the evil inclination. Every day, he cunningly plays on our weaknesses, wanting only to create distance between us and G-d. This story is first in the Torah because this is our essential struggle.

Every time we overcome the snake's cunning, we are drawn closer to G-d and He is filled with pride. His truth wins at the moment false deception is trumped.

In the same way that we must overcome the enemy within, we as a people are constantly threatened by external enemies, many that seek to annihilate the Jewish nation. The nature of man is to follow his perceived best interest, regardless of what is right and true. So even civilized nations that claim to be our friends can end up treating us with deceit, enabling and supporting the snakes that seek to annihilate us.

This too is a test. Our brothers and sisters in Israel are living under threat, and much of the world is supporting the murderers. They have often been tempted to play by the world's dishonest rules in the hope of proving that we are a civilized nation. G-d wants us to stand strong and do what is right in His eyes.

Righteousness and decency are on our side. We have nothing to prove. All that is necessary is the courage to do what is right. May the leadership in Israel have the courage to do what G-d wants, despite the pressure of the world.

May G-d protect us and our brothers and sisters the world over. And may we have the ultimate protection with the coming of Moshiach now! ■

# AARC book group explores world cuisine

*By Emily Eisbruch*

The Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC) embraces providing meaningful Jewish experiences for the range of community member interests, and our book group plays an important role," comments Rav Gavrielle, the AARC's spiritual leader.

In the past year, the AARC book group has met at the homes of at least four different members for book discussion and lunch, each time with a special flair and character. For example, in July the AARC book group discussed Ayelet Tsabari's book *Songs for the Brokenhearted,* which delves into the culture of Yemenite Jews. That book discussion was hosted by a couple who prepared delicious Yemenite food and offered members participating in the potluck to add to the menu. One woman brought a special Yemenite honey cake, enjoyed by all.

At another recent meeting, the AARC book group discussed a novel set partly in Mississippi (Howard Langer's *The Last Dekrepitzer,* about a Hasidic Holocaust survivor taken in by a Black family after World War II). The host set the tone with a wonderful dish featuring southern vegetables and beans.

"Once in a while the AARC book group meets on Zoom, but our most memorable meetings are the lunch gatherings," says Greg Saltzman, who has coordinated the AARC book group for about a decade. "My wife, Audrey, enjoys feeding people, and she sometimes prepares a feast of fresh-cooked and fresh-baked food." Whether we have an exotic cuisine or not, getting together for book discussion and a meal leads to great connections, both intellectually and socially.

If you would like to join upcoming meetings of the AARC book group, please contact Greg Saltzman at gsaltzman@albion.edu. On Sunday, October 19, the book group will discuss *The Mensch Method* by Todd Zive. In December, the book group plans to discuss *By the Waters of Paradise: An American Story of Racism and Rupture in a Jewish Family,* by Clare Kinberg.

The AARC is a caring, inclusive, and music-loving community of people who want to practice and study Judaism, or simply be around people who share a commitment to Judaism's values. The AARC's spiritual leader, Rav Gavrielle Pescador, is known for her warmth, her collaborative spirit, and her incredible voice and harp playing. You are invited to visit https://aarecon.org/ or email info@aarecon.org to learn more about the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation.

### *AARC events for October*

**Yom Kippur**

Kol Nidrei October 1 6:30–9:30 p.m.
Yom Kippur October 2 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Family/Children's Service 10:30–11:30 a.m.
Section A Workshops 1:45–3:30 p.m.
Section B Workshops 3:45– :45 p.m.
Yizkor 5–6:30 p.m.
Neilah 6:45–7:45 p.m.
**Break Fast to follow**

Services are held at the Ann Arbor Unitarian Universalist Church, 4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48103. They are free and open to all.

***Orit Kamir***

**October 9**

Israeli scholar Orit Kamir, "Resistance in Israel to the ongoing war in Gaza," at the JCC. 6:30–8:30 p.m.
From the outside it may appear that Israeli society supports the Israeli government and the war, but internally there is massive resistance to both the war and Netanyahu's government and policies. What forms does the resistance take? How is the government responding and what price do those in the resistance pay for their actions? We will hear from one of many Israeli citizens who participates in essentially nonstop demonstrations and is active in resistance to the government. To learn more about Orit Kamir, you can refer to her website: https://www.oritkamir.org/en/

**October 11**

Meditation led by Anita Rubin-Meuller, 10–10:20 a.m. followed by a hybrid Shabbat Service led by our Rabbi, Gabrielle Pescador, at the JCC and on Zoom. Zoom link will be sent out the week before the event. 10:30 a.m.–noon.

**October 24**

Fourth Friday Kabbalat Shabbat. This is a hybrid service led by Rabbi Gavrielle Pescador in person at the JCC and on Zoom. Everyone is welcome! Followed by a nut-free potluck Oneg. 6:30 p.m.

**The AARC book group enjoying a Yemenite-themed meal**

# JCLP begins new year of training Jewish leaders

*By Kristina Riemer*

As the academic year gets underway at the University of Michigan, new and returning students of the school's Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP) dove into an orientation at the end of August that set the tone for a year of connection, challenge, and engagement. Over three days, the students engaged in group building activities, site visits to six different Jewish-connected organizations and congregations in downtown Detroit, and conversations about how to take on the seemingly impossible issues facing Jewish communities on campus and in the world. Orientation culminated on Monday morning, August 25, with JCLP's annual community welcome breakfast for 50 guests which included students, alumni, and community members, as well as U-M faculty administrators, students, and staff. The event served as a vibrant launch to the academic year, providing room for conversation, learning, and relationship-building within Ann Arbor's Jewish community.

***Following the breakfast, community leaders stayed for a longer conversation with JCLP students.***

Over breakfast, attendees reflected on some of the most pressing questions facing Jewish leaders and communities today. Topics included: What elements are essential for productive and meaningful dialogue across difference or disagreement? How can moral leadership move a community forward, particularly in challenging times? And how can Jewish communal leaders cultivate the capacity to see the humanity and complexity of those on different sides of the conflict in Gaza?

JCLP students played a central role in facilitating these reflections, thoughtfully guiding discussions that embraced a variety of perspectives. The breakfast provided students not only a platform to demonstrate and deepen their leadership and facilitation skills, but also an opportunity to reconnect with the wider community as the academic year begins. As students settle back into classes and campus life, their energy, thoughtfulness, and engagement — as well as the enthusiastic participation of all attendees — set a promising tone for the work ahead.

Looking forward, the Jewish Communal Leadership Program invites the broader community to its annual Sukkot Open House on Wednesday, October 8, from 5 to 7 p.m. The event will be held in the Sukkah in the School of Social Work courtyard, 1080 S University Ave, and will offer another opportunity for connection, community, and seasonal celebration. All are warmly welcomed to attend. Dairy, kosher-style traditional fare provided by Amanda's Kitchen. Please RSVP at https://myumi.ch/A1Rg4 or contact kriemer@umich.edu with any questions.

# Simchas and Sorrows

### *The Washtenaw Jewish community sends condolences to the families of:*

Evelyn Horwitz, mother of Ivy Krasnow. Saturday, August 16, 2025.
Miriam Davis, grandmother of Rachel (Michael) Goldberg and great-grandmother of Margo. August 20, 2025.
Carol Manheim, mother of Julie (Scott) Hershovitz and grandmother of Rex and Hank. August 24, 2025.

### *The Washtenaw Jewish community sends mazel tovs to:*

Katie Brieloff (daughter of George and Sally) and Josh Davidson (son of Esther and Steve Davidson of West Bloomfield) on their engagement. They are expecting a June 2026 wedding.
Robin and Rod Little on the birth of their grandson Liam on August 27 in Oakland, California, to Andrew Little and Caroline Cahill.
Barbara and Dario Merlos on the birth of their grandson, Reuben Lawrence (Reuven Shalom) born on August 24 to parents Emmeline and Brian.
Cheryl and Mark Good on the birth of their granddaughter, Evelyn Leslie, daughter of Alan and Hannah Good, sister to Eleanor, and great granddaughter of the late Leslie and Phyllis Werbel and Yvonne and Ron Good.
Claudia and Robert Kraus Piper on the birth of their grandson Micah Joshua Thomas McIntire, son of Eliana Piper and Sam McIntire, August 19, 2025.
Lauren and Frank Zinn on the birth of their grandson Cameron Joseph Cosgrove, son of Mara and Ryan Cosgrove, August 26, 2025.

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## JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER ANN ARBOR

# MAIN EVENT

## MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2025

FEATURING

# MITCH ALBOM

New York Times Bestselling Author, Philanthropist, Sports Reporter and Michigander

AUTHOR OF NUMEROUS BESTSELLING BOOKS OF FICTION AND NONFICTION, INCLUDING "TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE"

## TICKETS & DETAILS

at JLIVE.APP (Ann Arbor events)

or scan the QR code

### THANK YOU TO THIS YEAR'S EVENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Carrie Bank
Jack Fuchsman
Diana Ingberg
Heidi Kahana
David Lauer
Robyn Schmier

### CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Attendees are expected to support the community with a meaningful gift to the Jewish Federation's 2026 Annual Community Campaign. (Suggested minimum donation $100.)

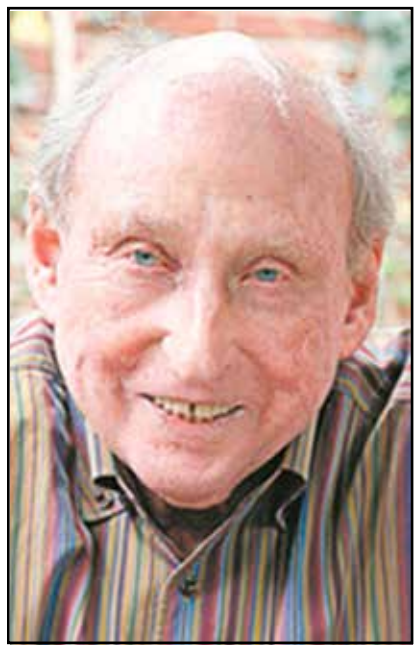
Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

# In honor of Herb Amster

*By Melissa Goodson*

Fifteen years ago, the world lost a remarkable man. Yet Herb Amster's vision, generosity, and belief in the power of community live on — woven into the very fabric of Jewish Family Services (JFS) and the Herb Amster Center that proudly carries his name.

"The only place Herb's name is formally recognized is at JFS, which feels fitting. He believed in dignity, responsibility, and helping people stand on their own two feet" says his friend, Alan Cotzin, who is also an investor in the Center.



***Herb Amster***

Herb and his beloved wife, Carol, shared a deep commitment to cooperation, innovation, and excellence — values they carried into both the nonprofit and business worlds. As Norman Herbert once reflected: "Herb advocated for financial sustainability. He would be very proud of the role JFS is playing to promote the economic well-being of individuals, families, and the community under the umbrella of the Herb Amster Center."

In 2008, a group of investors who believed in Herb's vision helped launch the Herb Amster Center. Their commitment carried forward Herb's ideas — that JFS could empower individuals and families through training, counseling, and employment services, while also serving those able to pay fees through corporate partnerships, third-party payments, and contractual arrangements. This forward-thinking model reduced reliance on grants and created a foundation of earned revenue to ensure long-term sustainability.

Since then, JFS has steadily grown its earned revenue from $34,000 to $452,000, fueled by the expertise of our team and the strength of our programs. Through educational offerings and trainings, along with innovative services like Nourish (contracted healthy and medically tailored meals for the community) and Thrive (counseling supported through insurance-based fees), the Amster Center has become a driver of innovation and resilience. We continue to expand this work, holding fast to Herb's wise advice to "scale ourselves to be less reliant on philanthropy and diversify our revenue streams."

Herb's legacy lives not only through the Amster Center but also through his family. Carol's steadfast involvement after his passing ensured that his vision was honored, while his children and grandchildren continue to embody his spirit of contribution in their own ways.

Today, as we reflect on Herb's life, we celebrate the enduring impact of his generosity. His name, carried forward at JFS, represents dignity, responsibility, and the unwavering belief that when we lift one another up, we create lasting change.

Cotzin continued, "Nobody ever turned me down when I mentioned Herb. That's just the kind of man he was — helpful to anyone who needed him, thoughtful in his advice, and always reminding us to do good, but watch the bottom line."

Herb Amster's legacy is alive in the Amster Center — a living tribute that empowers people, strengthens families, and builds a resilient community for generations to come. ■

Supported by
The Herb Amster Center
powered by Jewish Family Services

# JFS Voices: Betre's Story

*By Betre Getahun, Cyber Security Director of Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County*

***Betre Getahun***

***Betre with JFS coworkers at the annual Walk a Mile in My Shoes event supporting refugee services.***

I have been part of JFS since 2016, the very day I first set foot in this country. Over the years, I have walked this path in many roles — as a client, a case manager, a program manager, a Cybersecurity Specialist, and as Cybersecurity Director. Each step has been a chapter filled with resilience, hard work, growth, and service.

I was born and raised in Ethiopia, East Africa, and in 2014 I was forced to flee my homeland. The struggles I endured before leaving, and the challenges I faced as a refugee, reshaped who I am today. They also gave me a profound understanding of the lifesaving role that agencies like JFS play. For refugees escaping conflict and persecution, and searching for peace and security, the services JFS provides are more than support — they are a lifeline, a pathway to dignity, and a chance to rebuild hope and restore what was lost.

From the moment our clients arrive in the country, JFS walks with them — offering resettlement, employment support, cultural orientation, skills training, and so much more. I have had the privilege of helping resettle hundreds of families from across the globe and have witnessed firsthand the profound impact of these services. I have seen clients rebuild their lives with remarkable determination — starting new careers and achieving success, pursuing higher education and realizing their dreams, and creating thriving, happy families. I have witnessed lost hope restored, deep wounds healed, and communities strengthened.

I always feel both humbled and proud — proud to serve an agency that transforms lives and humbled by the clients whose strength and determination have left an indelible mark on me. Today, I invite you to stand with us and ensure that the services we provide — services that are truly critical for so many — remain strong and accessible. With your support, we can continue to offer that lifeline and carry out our mission: to heal wounds, restore hope, rebuild what was lost, and empower people to create brighter futures.

To show your support of JFS, please make a donation or volunteer with us. Visit www.jfsannarbor.org to learn more.

*At Jewish Family Services, every person who walks through our doors has a story to tell. JFS Voices is a monthly letter that brings those stories to life — through the words of the people who make our mission possible. From staff and volunteers to newcomers and longtime clients, each edition will highlight the real, personal impact of JFS's work in our community. Join us as we share moments of resilience, kindness, and transformation.*

*These are the voices of JFS — stories of hope, dignity, and the power of human connection. Thank you for being part of our journey.* ■

# Developing a mitzvah of environmental sustainability

*By Chava Israel*

In 2019, Rabbis Beth Cardin and Avram Israel Reisner presented a Teshuvah (Responsum) to the Conservative Committee on Jewish Law and Standards to address the need for a comprehensive environmental ethic rooted in halachah and ethical writings. The goal was to determine major Jewish teachings and recommendations in response to climate change and environmental degradation.

The paper outlines two fundamental mitzvot that underpin our responsibilities toward environmental sustainability: Yishuv Ha'Olam — to create and maintain a habitable world, and Bal Tashchit — to not destroy or waste resources that sustain us.

Bal Tashchit is derived from Deuteronomy 20:19–20, the commandment to not destroy fruit trees during wartime. This was expanded in the Talmud by a common rabbinic method of deriving a logical wider inference from a narrower stringent case. If we must not destroy a source of sustenance during a time when destruction is the norm, then this applies even more so to our everyday lives and the lives of future generations.

Yishuv Ha'Olam is derived from the commandments given in the two creation stories, specifically Genesis 1:15 and 2:15 and a verse in Isaiah (45:18). "It is God who creates the heavens, who fashions the earth and makes it … God did not create the world to be chaos. God fashioned it to be inhabited." The first describes an unproblematic and entirely self-sustaining creation, where we are commanded to fill and master the earth.

The second presents the core of our predicament. Our role is now clearly symbiotic with nature: we make it habitable through our work and maintain it by guarding it, but we are presented with a dilemma. There are now fruits that are forbidden, and we choose to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. This is the story of our loss of innocence and separation from the self-sustaining world of Genesis 1, but it also hints at how we fulfill that first commandment of Yishuv HaOlam.

Our knowledge of extracting earth's resources, which we have used to create civilization, has allowed us to fulfill the commandment to master nature. However, it also has the potential to disrupt nature at a global level. We are now at a turning point where each of us must consciously act to bring these two mitzvot together. . ■

# Adamah's Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition

*by Michael S. Simon for the BIC Green Team Task Force*

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC) is a proud member of Adamah's Jewish Climate Leadership Coalition. In 2022, 20 major Jewish organizations signed up to launch the Coalition, demonstrating a consensus that the Jewish community is ready for and capable of taking collective climate action. The umbrella organizations included synagogues, day schools, JCCs, Hillels, Federations, camps, and other agencies, representing a broad spectrum of community support. The Coalition is now a network of 400 Jewish nonprofit organizations, committed to converting words into action.

Through the affiliation, BIC has access to the collective experience of Jewish climate activists. Membership is free, and participation on an

***Michael Simon and Jerry Sorokin***

administrative level is relatively simple. Each organization designates 1–2 staff liaisons to lead their climate action work and completes an annual organizational Climate Action Plan (CAP). CAPs detail climate actions taken to date and set goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the coming year. Adamah has made the process simple with a specialized, user-friendly web form that provides a menu of actions to take. There are no minimum requirements or penalties for falling short on goals.

For member organizations, Adamah provides accountability and resources to support meaningful climate action. Members can apply for interest-free loans of up to $100,000 and matching grants of up to $10,000 for projects that source clean electricity, increase electrification, or enhance energy efficiency. Past examples of Adamah-supported projects at Beth Israel Congregation include: 2022 ASHRAE Level II energy audit; new fencing for a Faith and Food community garden; motion sensors for restroom lights and fan operation; and a pilot placement of LED bulbs and fixtures in the office hallway. In 2023, a matching grant of $10,000 funded the replacement of every incandescent bulb in both buildings with LED lighting. This involved the replacement of 415 luminaires, including 338 in the main building and 77 in the school annex. This installation comes with a predicted annual saving of $7,826.95 in electric costs, and a payback period of 3.6 years.

The BIC Green Team Task Force is thankful for the support of the congregational leadership, including Rabbi Nadav Caine, Jerry Sorokin, the board, and members. Plans are underway to continue the work to provide a safe and sustainable life for future generations. ■

# Leave the leaves

*By Rabbi Sara Adler, Staff Chaplain, University of Michigan Hospitals*

Why do Jews begin the new year in the fading light of summer and as leaves fall from the trees, exposing their bare branches to the cold? During Sukkot, we can almost taste and smell the earth preparing for its deep slumber. Wooded trails are scented by the fallen, decaying leaves. I've often wondered why our spiritual time of renewal occurs as the natural world is shutting down.

***Rabbi Sara Adler***

As environmental protections are being dismantled, I worry about other things that may end. I grieve for our climate and plummeting levels of biodiversity. I mourn habitat loss and the decline of insect and bird populations.

Instead of viewing it as an ending, I now regard leaf-fall as a miraculous beginning. Within the leaf litter are eggs, cocoons, and chrysalids, as well as dormant caterpillars that will transform themselves in spring. Most of our moth species (including luna moths) and native bees rely upon decomposing leaves for protection and warmth as they overwinter. The larvae of fireflies can live up to three years blanketed by leaves before they emerge as beloved summer guests. (Sadly, they don't survive being swept into compost bins or mulched by mowers.)

Fallen leaves are nurseries for our threatened insect populations. Literature about bird conservation teaches that without caterpillars and other soft-bodied insects, birds are unable to feed their young. We may believe that our plants and soil

shut down or die at autumn's end, but in reality, the hidden ground beneath us is teeming with life we don't see.

Adding native plants and not spraying our yards with herbicides is a tangible way to care for our planet. Letting the leaves remain in our garden beds until spring (when the weather warms) is a powerful act of resistance during our troubling times. Each of us has the power to perform this humble yet radical act of tikkun olam.

Leviticus 23:22 instructs, "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger." We, who live in suburbs or urban communities, can honor this verse by leaving (at least) the corners of our yards and communal spaces covered by the bounty of leaves. May this season of renewal strengthen our resolve and help us find hope even in the smallest of acts. ■

# Judaism's gift: Exile and return

*By Lauren Zinn, special to the WJN*

*This is the fourth installment of a series from Lauren Zinn's book, Belong to the World, Bring Your Tribe: Reimagining Judaism in the Interspiritual Age.*

***Lauren Zinn***

In *God Is Not One*, Stephen Prothero, Professor Emeritus of Religion in America at Boston University, explores the distinctive problems each major religion tries to solve and the unique solutions they offer. For Christianity, the problem is "sin" and the solution is "salvation"; for Islam, "pride" and "submission"; for Hinduism, the problem is "samsara" (birth, death, and rebirth). The solution, "moksha" (liberation), is realizing the unity of the self and the divine. For Judaism, the problem is "exile," the solution "return."

In Jewish history, exile (galut) is everywhere. God sends Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, and even Moses away. In addition, Assyrians, Babylonians, Romans, and others forced the migration of the Israelites. The quintessential exilic drama, the story of Adam and Eve, is our Jewish legacy. Their hope of return to the Garden of Eden is our hope of return to God. Redemption is our ticket out of exile. But exile and return (indeed, all the problems and solutions in Prothero's schema) present a paradox. Does being Jewish depend on being in exile? (Does being Hindu depend on samsara?)

For Jews, if exile ends, what then is our gift/purpose, as Jews?

If exile is a physical separation from a homeland, are those of us who go there still in exile? Politically, no. Zionism claimed to end Jewish exile. Theologically, no. Jews living in Israel achieved their return. Jews living in the Diaspora remain in exile (and are denigrated for it by Israelis as somehow less). Diasporic Jews must celebrate two seders on Passover while Israeli Jews are obligated to celebrate only one. With today's Zionism, the value of Judaism's exile, as Prothero imagines it, is lost.

Return (teshuvah), for me, is about closeness with God and the experience that comes with making all life holy, raising up the sparks of divinity that were shattered when God created the world, as Rabbi Isaac Luria explained. Judaism, I thought, offered the value of tikkun olam (repair of the world), tzedakah (charity), and chesed (loving-kindness) with praying, chanting, studying, and the mitzvot (commandments) for making the world a better place. If return is not possible, then Judaism needs to redefine its mission. If it is possible, then Judaism needs exile to achieve return.

How can other religious practitioners learn from Judaism about teshuvah if Jews no longer live in exile? We experience return because we experience exile, a separation from God. We are exiled from experiencing oneness with God, not from separation from the Land.

In *The Necessity of Exile*, Shaul Magid argues for preserving exile in Jewish life. Diminishing or erasing it comes at a cost to our identity. Political Zionism then undermines Judaism's special gift.

Magid argues for a "counter-Zionism" that allows us to be in exile in the diaspora and in Israel. Reclaiming exile (and thus return) can help us uncouple Zionism from Judaism. This gives us a chance to archive our Israel-centric Judaism, our Israelism, and our ethnocentric form of religion, with the history of Judaism. In turn, we make room for a new Judaism detached from political Zionism, a Judaism that can flourish in the Interspiritual Age.

What is Judaism if it is detached from Zionism? For many Jews, Zionism and Judaism are the same. This is problematic for the task of bringing the tribe to belong to the World. The parable of The Rooster Prince by Rabbi Nachman of Breslov (1772–1810), founder of the Breslov form of Hasidism, might help us.

**The Rooster Prince**

*A young prince thinks he is a rooster, takes off his clothes, sits naked under the table, and pecks at his food on the floor. Horrified by his behavior, the king and queen call in experts to convince the prince to act human again. Nothing works. Then a new wise person comes to the palace. He takes off his clothes and sits naked under the table with the prince, claiming to be a rooster, too. Gradually the prince accepts him as a friend. The wise man tells the prince that a rooster can wear clothes, eat at the table, and act human. Gradually, the Rooster Prince accepts this idea and step-by-step, begins to act human again, until he is fully cured.*

Have Zionists become Rooster Princes? Have they forgotten who they are?

Today, Jews are exiled not by "God" (Adam and Eve) or "others" (a history of persecutors) but by ourselves. As Wendy Elisheva Somerson explains in *An Anti-Zionist Path to Embodied Jewish Healing,* Anti-Zionist Jews who see Zionists oppress Palestinians may choose not to identify with their tribe at all, or to distance themselves from Jews and Jewishness. The danger of this response is that it cedes Jewishness to Zionism, forestalling our return to justice. During a virtual vigil on grief in the face of genocide, "We Will Not Look Away," Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb invoked Jewish participants to remember that Judaism existed before Zionism. Our job is to stop Zionism and return to Judaism. She also said that it is only through solidarity with others that we can all heal and be liberated. For me, this means new forms of Judaism, new Jewish spaces. I call it interspiritual. ■

# TBE events in October

Events and services are both in person and/or virtual. Please see www.templebethemeth.org for full details, location information, and links.

**Tot Shabbat Service & Dinner**
Fridays at 5:45 p.m.
Join the Clergy to celebrate Shabbat with fun activities, stories, songs, and age-appropriate learning for children ages 0–5. Registration requested

**Elementary Shabbat Service & Dinner (every second Friday of the month)**
Fridays at 5:45 p.m.
A short service, song session, and community building! Most appropriate for children ages 5–10 and their parents, grandparents, and other adults. Everyone is welcome! Registration requested.

**Wine & Cheese Shabbat Reception**
Fridays at 6 p.m. (except for the second Friday of each month)

**Shabbat Service**
Fridays at 6:30 p.m. (every second Friday of the month is at 7:30 p.m.)

**Saturday Shabbat service**
Saturdays at 10 a.m.

**Shabbat morning Torah study**
Saturdays at 8:50 a.m.
Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion.

**Weekday morning blessings**
Weekdays at 9:15 a.m.
Join TBE lay leaders each weekday morning for a short service of song, poetry, and meditation.

**Twenty-five-minute mindfulness with Jewish spiritual director Linda Greene**
Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.
Zoom room opens at 8:15 a.m. for optional check-in. Blessing and intention setting 8:30–8:35 a.m. Meditate 8:35–9 a.m. Start your day centered and connected.

**Queer Torah Study**
Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
Join us in person or via Zoom for a discussion of queer themes in the weekly Torah portion! Led by Ari Marcotte & Ari Smith. Guest leaders welcome! Contact Ari M (ari.j.marcotte@gmail.com) for more information.

**Back Door Food Pantry**
Thursdays, 4 to 7 p.m.

**Meditation with Claire Weiner**
Thursdays at 5 p.m.
Join Claire Weiner for a 40-minute meditation session.

**Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Whinston**
Fridays at 12 p.m.

**Weekly Mahj**
Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.
Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.

**WTBE Gift Shop Open**
Fridays at 5:30 p.m. (Every second Friday of the month is at 7:30 p.m.)
Washtenaw s only Judaica Shop!

**Jewish Book Club**
Most Thursdays beginning September 4, at 11 a.m.

**Adult Hebrew Class**
Sundays, October 5, 12, 19, at 4:30 p.m.

**Introduction to Judaism Class**
Sundays, October 5, 12, 19, at 7:15 p.m.

**Heart/Mind Centering Practices with Sandra Berman**
Monday, October 6, at 1 p.m.

**WTBE Novel Reading Group**
Wednesday, October 8, at 1 p.m.

**Valuing Ourselves as we Age with Marcy Plunkett**
Wednesday, October 8, at 1 p.m.

**Brotherhood Guys Night Out**
Thursday, October 9, at 6:30 p.m.

**Renaissance Group Guided Nature Walk**
Sunday, October 12, at 10:30 a.m.

**WISE Senior Center and Decisions for Dignity**
Thursday, October 16, at 10 a.m.

**LGBTQ Shabbat Potluck**
Friday, October 17, at 5:30 p.m.

**Psalms and (P)spirituality**
Mondays, October 20 and 27, at 12 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.

**Mining Your Memories through Writing with Rita Benn**
Tuesdays, October 21 and 28, 11 a.m.

**Rosh Chodesh**
Wednesday, October 22, at 5:30 p.m.

**TBE Life & Legacy Stewardship Shabbat**
Friday, October 24, at 5:30 p.m.

**Kitchen Kindness**
Saturday, October 25, at 12:30 p.m.

**WTBE Tour of Michigan Central Station**
Sunday, October 26, at 9:30 a.m. ■

# Calendar

Always check websites or call for updates before planning to attend anything listed here. For Yom Kippur service times, see each congregations information.

**Wednesday 1 Erev Yom Kippur begins at 6:58 p.m.**
**Kol Nidrei:** Pardes Hannah**.** In-person and online**.** 6:30 p.m.
**Kol Nidrei and YK:** BIC see page 7
**Kol Nidrei and YK**: AARC see page 14
**Kol Nidrei and YK:** see TBE website
**Kol Nidrei and YK:** Kol Nidre Wednesday October 1, p.m. at the JCC, Yom Kippur Thursday October 2, 2 p.m. at the JCC, Break-the-Fast "Potluck" Thursday October 2, 6 p.m. at the JCC

**Thursday 2 Yom Kippur, holiday ends 7:55 p.m.**
**Yom Kippur Services**: Pardes Hannah. In-person and online.10 a.m.

**Friday 3**
Candle Lighting 6:54 p.m.

**Saturday 4** Ha'azinu
Havdallah 7:52 p.m.

**Sunday 5**
**Remnants by Hank Greenspan book launch.** 1 p.m.

**Monday 6** Erev Sukkot

**Tuesday 7** Sukkot

**Wednesday 8** Sukkot
**JCLP Sukkot open house**. 5 to 7 p.m.

**Thursday 9** Sukkot
**Yiddish succos.** 3 p.m.

**Friday 10** Sukkot
Candle Lighting 6:42 p.m.

**Saturday 11** Sukkot
Havdallah 7:40 p.m.
**Shabbat Morning Services.** Pardes Hannah. In-person and online. 10 a.m.

**Sunday 12** Sukkot

**Monday 13**

**Tuesday 14** Shemini Atzeret

**Wednesday 15 Simchat Torah**

**Thursday 16**
**October 7 Commemoration.** JCC. 6:30.

**Friday 17**
Candle Lighting 6:31 p.m.

**Saturday 18 Bereshit**
Havdallah 7:30 p.m.
Study Session. Pardes Hannah. In-person and online. 3 p.m.
**Sunday 19**

**Monday 20**

**Tuesday 21**
**Should Hate Speech be Regulated on Social Media?** Wallenberg Institute 4 p.m**.**
**The Great Yiddish Parade: Culture, Activism, and Song.** 5 p.m.

**Wednesday 22 Rosh Hodesh Cheshvan**
***Yidish tish***: (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): Zoom. About 45 minutes each of conversation and reading. Free and open to all those interested in Yiddish language, literature, and culture, no matter what level of proficiency. For more information, to get the link, and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please email Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu at least one day before scheduled meeting day every Wednesday (except major Jewish holidays). 2:00 p.m.

**Israel Symphony Orchestra Rishon Lezion String Trio.** BIC.
**Thursday 23 Rosh Hodesh Cheshvan**
**Transnational Yiddish Press: A Scholarly Roundtable.** 5:30
**Rosh Chodesh Circle.** Pardes Hannah. Online only**.** 7 p.m.

**Friday 24**
Candle Lighting 7:21 p.m.
**The Beit Midrash Art Studio: Stepping Into Our Strength.** 12 p.m.

**Saturday 25 Noach**
Havdallah 7:20 p.m.

**Sunday 26**
**Limmud Michigan** presents *The Condition of the Jewish People*, Sunday, October 26, at Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Southfield. In this timely program, five leading Jewish public intellectuals—Elliott Abrams, David Harris, Tal Becker, Susannah Heschel, and Simone Rodan-Benzaquen—will join moderator Dr. Howard Lupovich for a wide-ranging panel discussion. Together, they will explore the profound changes and urgent challenges confronting Jews worldwide, offering insight, perspective, and pathways for understanding. For information and registration use password **lomdim25** at limmudmichigan2025.sched.com. Begins at 10:30 a.m.

**Monday 27**
**Nathan-ism documentary screening with filmmaker Elan Golod. EMU.** 6:30 p. m

**Tuesday 28**

**Wednesday 29**
***Yidish tish***: (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group, see above): Zoom. 2:00 p.m.
**Dybbuk: Yiddish Spooky Movie.** 3 p.m.

**Thursday 30**

Friday 31
Candlelight 6:11 p.m.

**Phone numbers, websites, and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:**

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM): 1429 Hill Street, 248-408-3269, annarborminyan.org

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-445-1910, aarecon.org

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washtenaw Ave, 734-665-9897, bethisrael-aa.org

Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-3276, jewmich.com

Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies (EMU): www.emich.edu/jewish-studies/

Frankel Center: 202 S. Thayer St., lsa.umich.edu/judaic/

Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccannarbor.org

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishculturalsociety.org

Jewish Family Services (JFS): 2245 South State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org

Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org

Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-761-5324, pardeshannah.org

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org

UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500, michiganhillel.org ■

## Tip: Food Composting in Washtenaw County

*by Annie Wolock*

Composting food is an easy way to take personal responsibility for helping fight climate change. It's simple to get started, and this month, we aim to answer some of your questions. Hopefully, you'll come away with a better understanding and some motivation to compost your food waste.

### *Which Communities Have Municipal Curbside Compost?*

Unfortunately, there aren't many options for composting in Washtenaw County outside of Ann Arbor's municipal service.

If you live in the Ypsilanti area, you can sign up online at GrowingHope.net to join their compost collection service. Once you sign up, you can collect your compost and drop it off at the Ypsilanti Farmers Market. Just remember—they don't accept meat, bones, dairy, or pet waste.

Ann Arbor residents can add food scraps directly to their compost bin for curbside pickup. Just fill your bin with food waste and leave it out on your trash day.

### *Ann Arbor's Curbside Pickup Details*

**What Can You Compost?**
All food scraps: This means EVERYTHING.
Including meat and bones
Coffee grounds and paper filters
Food-soiled paper
CMA-W certified compostable products

**What Can't Be Composted in Ann Arbor?**

No plastic or plastic-like materials.
BPI-certified or other "compostable" materials
Bamboo or palm leaf products
Only CMA-W-certified products and fibrous materials are accepted. Biodegradable plastic, bamboo, and palm leaf items don't break down fast enough in the system. That means compostable (or biodegradable) plastic bags aren't allowed, either.

### *What if You Don't Have a Composting Service?*

About 5% of our total waste is food waste. When food waste goes into the trash, recycle bin, or garbage disposal, it produces methane, a greenhouse gas even worse than CO2.

There aren't many easy options if you don't have municipal service, but the best way is to create and use your own compost pile. To learn composting basics, visit Washtenaw.org/351/Composting.

If you live in an apartment, ask your building management about setting up a community compost pile. ■

# Hot pink controversy

*By Ari Smith, WJN staff reporter*

Washtenaw residents may have seen a new series of eye-catching billboards surrounding Ann Arbor bearing the name of JewBelong, a nonprofit organization founded in 2017 with the goal of increasing Jewish joy and connection for those they refer to as disengaged Jews. Over the years, JewBelong has increasingly focused on antisemitism. Earlier slogans about Jewish guilt and bacon have largely given way to more pointed messaging about October 7, Zionism, and Israel.

The four new hot pink billboards around Ann Arbor present the taglines "Jewish students don't need your pity. Just your spine," and "Being Jewish shouldn't require campus security," drawing mixed reactions from Jewish University of Michigan students. "I really like the first one," says David Gankin, a junior at the University. "It's asking the broader community to stand with Jewish students when they talk about their discomfort and to acknowledge that antisemitism does exist on our campus, and that it can't just be on Jewish students to be responsible for fixing the problem.

"Even just talking about this makes me uncomfortable," Gankin continues, "which is sad because I wish I wasn't uncomfortable talking about my identity, but the campus environment has made me uneasy about it. Talking about these important topics is good, but I am very aware of my Jewishness and how it might change how people see me. Before coming to this campus, I always had my Magen David out, but now I am constantly aware of it."

These feelings are echoed by sophomore Samantha Caminker, who adds that "Before beginning college, the question of 'should I mention I'm Jewish' was unrelated to Israel. It's such a present issue on campus — it's no longer just saying you're Jewish, but there are a lot of assumptions about political beliefs about the war and Israel."

A third-year PhD student who asked for anonymity disagrees. "These [billboards] are really problematic because they eliminate so many voices. It's impossible not to with a national campaign, but as a Jew it feels ridiculous and completely frustrating that I have to distance myself from an organization that claims to represent all Jews. And the thing is that Jews don't agree about anything! There's a lot of presupposition about what goes into a national campaign like this, and as a Jewish student and Jewish instructor, I have to think a lot about how the federal administration is making it actively more difficult to perform my research and teach in the name of 'fighting antisemitism.' I don't feel protected, I feel censored.

"What it does for me personally," they continue, "is it reminds me there are people who claim to work for my benefit that are actively causing me harm. It's ridiculous that they would have to say [being Jewish shouldn't require campus security]. All students have a right to feel safe and included on campus, but they aren't speaking to all students, it's about the Jews. If you don't agree with the statement, it implies you don't deserve that safety. JewBelong has the right to focus on Jews, but it's making my life harder *in my name.* That's the problem I have. If they tried to make things easier by asking us to respect each other, it would be really great. But instead, we have pithy, aggressive slogans that fan the flames. Things aren't black and white."

Despite the billboards merely saying "Paid for by JewBelong.org," they are being cosponsored by the Christian Broadcasting Network and Regent University, founded by controversial far-right televangelist Pat Robertson and currently helmed by his son, Gordon Robertson. "If it is sponsored by these organizations, then it is Christian voices trying to speak for Jews, even if they're working with a Jewish organization," says a recent graduate who wished to remain anonymous. "I can guarantee that the voices of those organizations do not align with the majority of the Ann Arbor Jewish population. For a Christian organization to come in and put their money behind this inflammatory project, using the name JewBelong, implies it is entirely an initiative taken up by Jewish people and that if a viewer thinks the message is wrong, bad or tone deaf, it is Jewish people who are the problem.

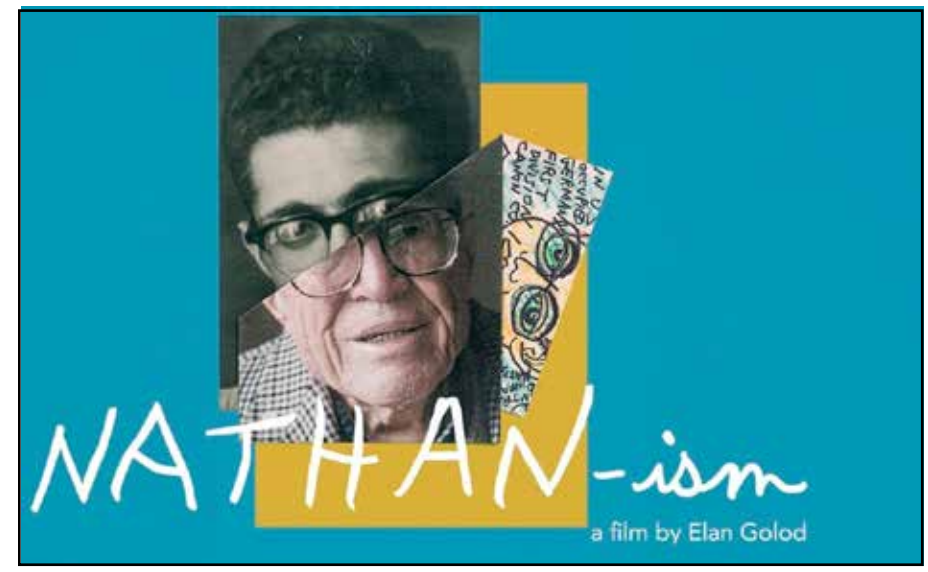
"There's no perfect safety," she continues, "but the best way to promote safety is to build a space in which you can be safe yourself and welcome other people into it. A billboard is not that space. There's no people or humanity in a billboard. Finding ways to share art and community and grief and mourning, that has to be done face to face." ■

# Filmmaker of documentary "Nathan-ism" at EMU Jewish Center

The highly acclaimed 2023 documentary, *Nathan-ism*, examines the fraught relationships between art and life as well as memory and history. This film follows Nathan Hilu, the son of Syrian Jewish immigrants to New York, who, at the end of World War II, received a life-changing assignment from the U.S. Army: to guard the top Nazi war criminals at the Nuremberg trials. Hilu spent the next 70 years obsessively recreating a visual narrative from his memories as a virtually unknown "outsider artist."

Filmmaker Elan Golod proposes a documentary portrait of the aging artist but what begins as a peek at a unique witness to history grows into an absorbing study of the function of art as archive and invention. Daring to question an artist's stories, *Nathan-ism* is a fascinating look at one man's need to share truths with a world that doesn't always want to listen.

The Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies will screen "Nathan-ism" on October 27 at 6:30 pm in the Student Center Auditorium. The filmmaker, Elan Golod, will be present to talk about the film and answer questions after the screening. This event is free and open to the public. Questions about the event can be directed to jewish.studies@emich.edu. ■




# Obituaries

*The WJN prints obituaries, memories, and eulogies free of charge for family members of Washtenaw Jewish community members as a service to the community and to honor the lives of those who have passed away. When local congregations send condolence notices to the WJN, the editor searches for obituaries online. Also, community members are invited to send obituaries to the editor.*

**Naomi Gottlieb Harrison**, a longtime resident of Ann Arbor and recently of West Orange, New Jersey, passed peacefully on August 1, 2025. A cherished sister, mother, grandmother, and wife, she was born Naomi Weisberg in 1938 in Chicago, to Alfred and Theresa (Herbst) Weisberg. She remembered her childhood in the

**Continues on pg 21**

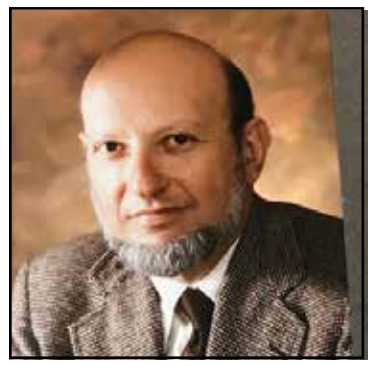
*Obituaries continues from pg. 20*

Rogers Park neighborhood and job at the branch library, cutting afternoon classes to go to Cubs games, and idyllic summers in the Indiana Dunes, with swimming lessons in Lake Michigan and outdoor theatricals for the kids.

Following in her father's path, Naomi became interested in architecture. She won a citywide design competition as a senior at Senn High School; she entered the University of Michigan's architecture degree program in 1955 as one of only two women in her class. While she was still an undergraduate, she met the medical student and later doctor Joel Gottlieb, in East Quad. They married, settled in town, and had three daughters, who survive her: Rebecca Gottlieb of Platteville, Wisconsin, Deborah Gottlieb Garrison (Matthew Garrison) of Montclair, New Jersey, and Susannah Gottlieb (Thomas Thompson) of Irvine, California. Naomi's husband Joel died in 1979, a few weeks before their 20th anniversary; she continued raising her daughters in Ann Arbor, where, in the late 1990s, she met and married Dr. Theodore Harrison, DDS, who predeceased her in 2023. Naomi is also survived by her sister, the artist Ruth Weisberg of Los Angeles; by her stepdaughter Jean Craig (Matthew Craig); by grandchildren Daisy, Georgia, and Walter Garrison, Joel and Regina Thompson, Kaynesha Craig (Ryan Woods) and Kylie Craig; and by great-grandson Theodore Woods.

Naomi began her career as an architect, designing her family's house on Penberton Drive in Ann Arbor, among other projects, but later became an accountant specializing in nonprofit work, most notably at Community Systems Foundation, an organization developing initiatives to support nutrition, education, and child protection for communities around the globe. She delighted in meeting colleagues from other cultures and welcomed far-flung visitors to her perch on the top floor of the foundation's then office on Hill Street in Ann Arbor. She ended her working life at Child Care Network, and alongside her jobs was a committed volunteer for democratic causes. She served for a term as the president of the local chapter of the League of Women Voters, and as treasurer for several political campaigns, including Michigan state senator Lana Pollack's run for U.S. Senate in 1994. She also volunteered her skills for the Huron River Watershed Council, and served as treasurer of the Ann Arbor chapter of ORT America, of which she was a member for decades.

Over the years, Naomi welcomed numerous appreciative housemates into her Penberton home and later her condo on Ridgmaar Square; all became part of her extended family. Naomi loved to travel — to Petosky, Pierport, and other favorite Michigan lake spots, to France and Italy to see art and architecture, to the western U.S. to hike, to Greece to tour the sights with her second husband, Ted — and took many trips to both coasts to visit her grandchildren. She gradually lost her vision in her late 60s but was undaunted; she continued to travel, to go to classical music concerts, and meet with her long-running book club and girlfriends' lunch group. Throughout her single and then remarried years, Naomi hosted multi-generational gatherings at her condo filled with art and books, where everyone brought a dish and her delicious baking was a regular feature, along with enthusiastic greetings from her terrier, Louie. After Ted's passing, Naomi moved to the Brighton Gardens community in West Orange, where she enjoyed the live music and the Friday afternoon Shabbat circle, and was fortunate to receive devoted care and form new friendships.



**Ralph Norman Haber** (May 15, 1932–June 3, 2025) was raised in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the eldest son of William and Fannie Haber. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Lyn, his brother Alan (Odile), and his children: Sabrina (Robert), Rebecca (Chris), Molly, Eric, Belinda, and Andrew (Asynthe). He was the proud grandfather to Gabriel, Marin, Eli, Asa, Dakota, Isa, Eleanor, Ruby, and Lou.

Ralph graduated with honors from the University of Michigan, and earned his PhD in psychology from Stanford University. He had a distinguished career teaching at Yale University, the University of Rochester, and retired from the University of Illinois as professor emeritus in 1994. Over his lifetime, he wrote eight books, published over 350 scientific articles and chapters, and testified in over 200 criminal and civil cases as an expert witness in eyewitness identification, fingerprint identification, memory, and human factors. In addition to his love of science, cognitive psychology, and the law, Ralph loved the Eastern Sierra. He and Lyn eagerly looked forward to their hiking and backpacking trips every summer. Ralph happily shared his knowledge and love of maps, camping, and the backcountry. With Lyn's gardening genius, they created their own paradise in the mountains of California. Ralph loved to entertain friends and family at his home. His family remembers his ability to tell fascinating tales, build and fix anything, his love of adventures, and earned a second master's degree (M.Ed in counseling) from The Citadel and added his uncanny ability to always know exactly where he was.

**Carol Manheim** (September 19, 1943–August 24, 2025) dedicated her life to healing, teaching, and service. Born in Canton, Ohio, she pursued her education at Flora Stone Mather College of Western Reserve University, earning an undergraduate degree in biology and chemistry. After working as a research lab technician at the Case Western Reserve medical school, she completed her graduate studies in Physical Therapy at Case Western Reserve University. Later in life, she Licensed Professional Counselor to her credentials.

After moving to Charleston with her family in 1980, Carol worked in physical therapy at Roper Hospital before she established her own private practice in West Ashley in 1985. Carol was passionate about pediatric physical therapy, serving Charleston County schools and expanding her practice to Dorchester County schools and beyond. She authored an influential physical therapy textbook that has been translated into a dozen languages. Carol shared her expertise through teaching engagements across the United States, Canada, and internationally in Poland, Italy, Spain, and Barbados, where she enjoyed connecting with people from diverse cultures.

Carol was deeply involved in her community. She was an active member of Synagogue Emanu El, serving multiple terms on the board of directors and most recently as the volunteer librarian. Her community service extended to roles on the board of Middleton Place Homeowners Association, president of Temple Israel Sisterhood (1979–80), and longtime member of Emanu El Sisterhood. She was a lifetime member of Hadassah and participated in the National Council of Jewish Women and ORT.

Her compassionate spirit led her to volunteer with the Charleston Animal Society, which became her retirement "job" and earned her Volunteer of the Year recognition. Carol's other volunteer work included serving with Begin with Books, supporting the Interfaith Crisis Ministry by preparing meals at its homeless shelter, volunteering as a counselor during the AIDS Quilt display in Marion Square, hosting fundraisers for the AIDS Foundation in Charleston, and ushering for Piccolo Spoleto.

Carol had a passion for the arts, particularly the Spoleto Festival's chamber music series, and was a longtime subscriber at the Dock Street Theatre.

She leaves behind her wife, Rhonda Ferris, her brother Michael Manheim, her children, Ron Kaplan (Yoni Bock), Paul Kaplan (Nicole Kaplan), Julie Kaplan Hershovitz (Scott Hershovitz), and her grandchildren, Jo Kaplan, Ben Kaplan, Rex Hershovitz, and Hank Hershovitz.

In lieu of food or flowers, the family would welcome donations in Carol's memory to the Charleston Animal Shelter, Donate - Charleston Animal Society or Synagogue Emanu-El.

**Evelyn Horwitz**, a cherished mother, grandmother, teacher, and leader, passed away peacefully on Saturday, August 16, 2025, at the age of 98. A celebration of her extraordinary life will be held in spring 2026, with details forthcoming.

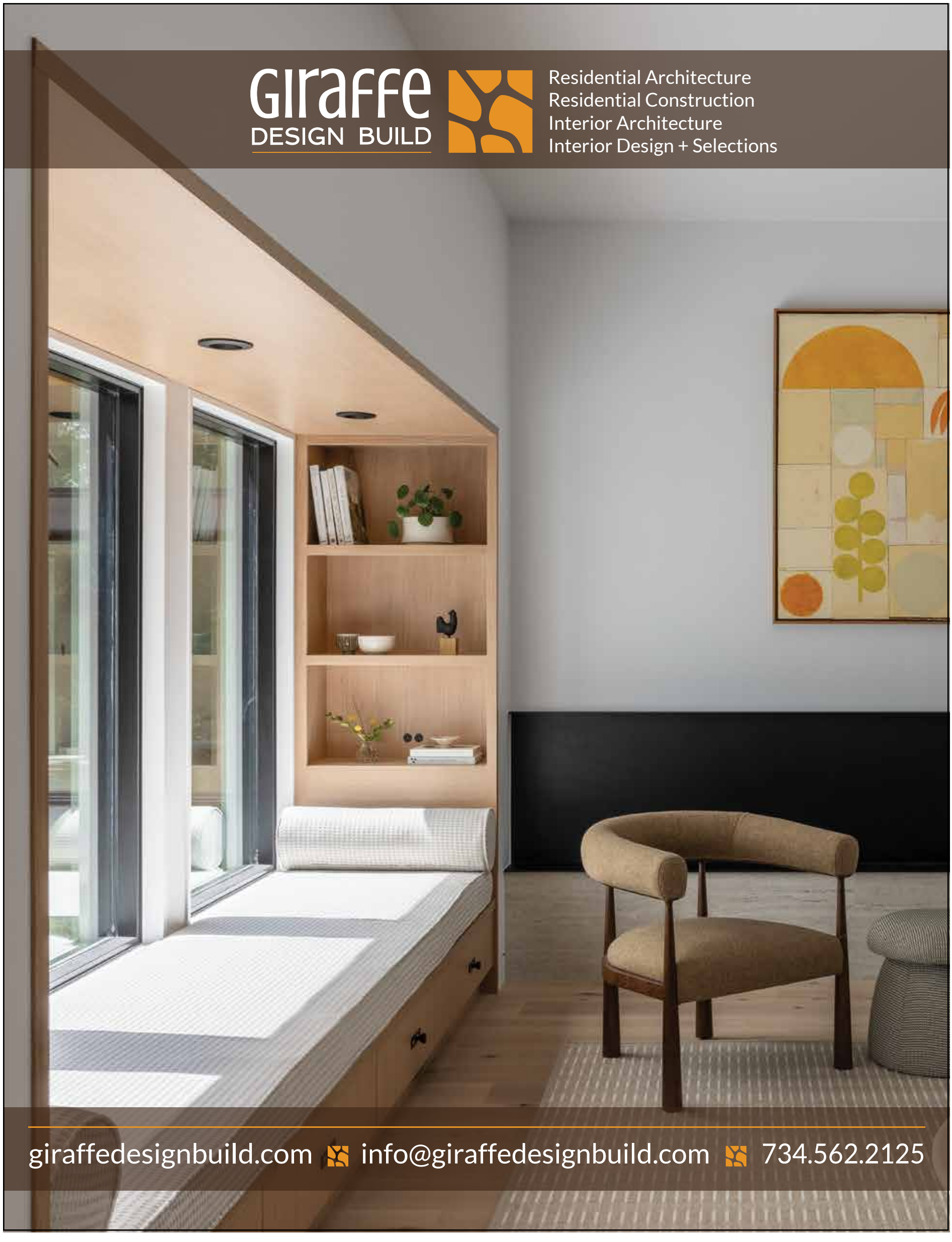
Born in Brooklyn, New York, Evelyn was the youngest of six children in a family of Russian immigrants. A first-generation American, she was the only college graduate in her family, earning a BA in English and Spanish from Brooklyn College in 1949. Her life was a testament to resilience, determination, and an unwavering commitment to education, family, and community.

Evelyn met her husband, Harold, one summer on a handball court in Brooklyn. They married that December. After Harold completed his PhD in mathematics at Ohio State University, they moved to D.C. where Harold worked for the U.S. Department of Defense and their first child Charles was born. They moved to Ann Arbor in 1954. They built a life here together, where Harold conducted research at Environmental Research Institute of Michigan. Their next three children: Ivy, Maxine, and Ray, were born in Ann Arbor. They raised their four children and embodied the American dream, navigating the challenges and triumphs of post-war America. Evelyn was a pioneer in her own right, returning to EMU in her 40s to obtain her Michigan teaching certification and embarking on a fulfilling career as an educator. She taught high school Spanish and English at Flat Rock High School from 1971 to 1985. After retiring, she continued to tutor students at EMU in 1994 and 1995. Her passion for teaching extended to volunteering as an ESL instructor, where she helped countless students from other countries learn English. She received the Washtenaw Literacy Founders' Memorial Award in 2016.

Evelyn's life was marked by her courage in the face of adversity. She survived multiple battles with cancer, including the loss of her right leg to a rare sarcoma. She turned her challenges into opportunities to inspire others. Her philosophy of "sink or swim" enabled her to persevere through life's hardships. She was a lifelong advocate for fitness and well-being, leading exercise classes for seniors well into her 90s. Her "Exercise with Evelyn" class was a popular and well-attended activity at her senior living residence.

Evelyn's dedication to helping others was a cornerstone of her life. Whether through teaching, volunteering, or simply offering kindness, she left an indelible mark on everyone she met. Evelyn was a vibrant force of nature. She was indisputably independent, a competitive card shark, and an avid garage-sale deal hunter, with a keen ability to shell out wise, no-nonsense advice on any topic. Her strength, humor, and compassion were a source of inspiration to her family, friends, and community.

Evelyn was preceded in death by her husband, Harold, and her eldest son, Charles. She is survived by her daughter Ivy Krasnow of Ann Arbor, Michigan, her son Ray (Ling) Horwitz of Atlanta, Georgia; and her daughter Maxine Horwitz, of Berthoud, Colorado. She also leaves her six dearly loved grandchildren: David and Jeffrey Krasnow of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Rachel (Yogesh) Krasnow, of Boston, Massachusetts; and Charlie, Nirelle, and Hyson Horwitz of Atlanta, Georgia.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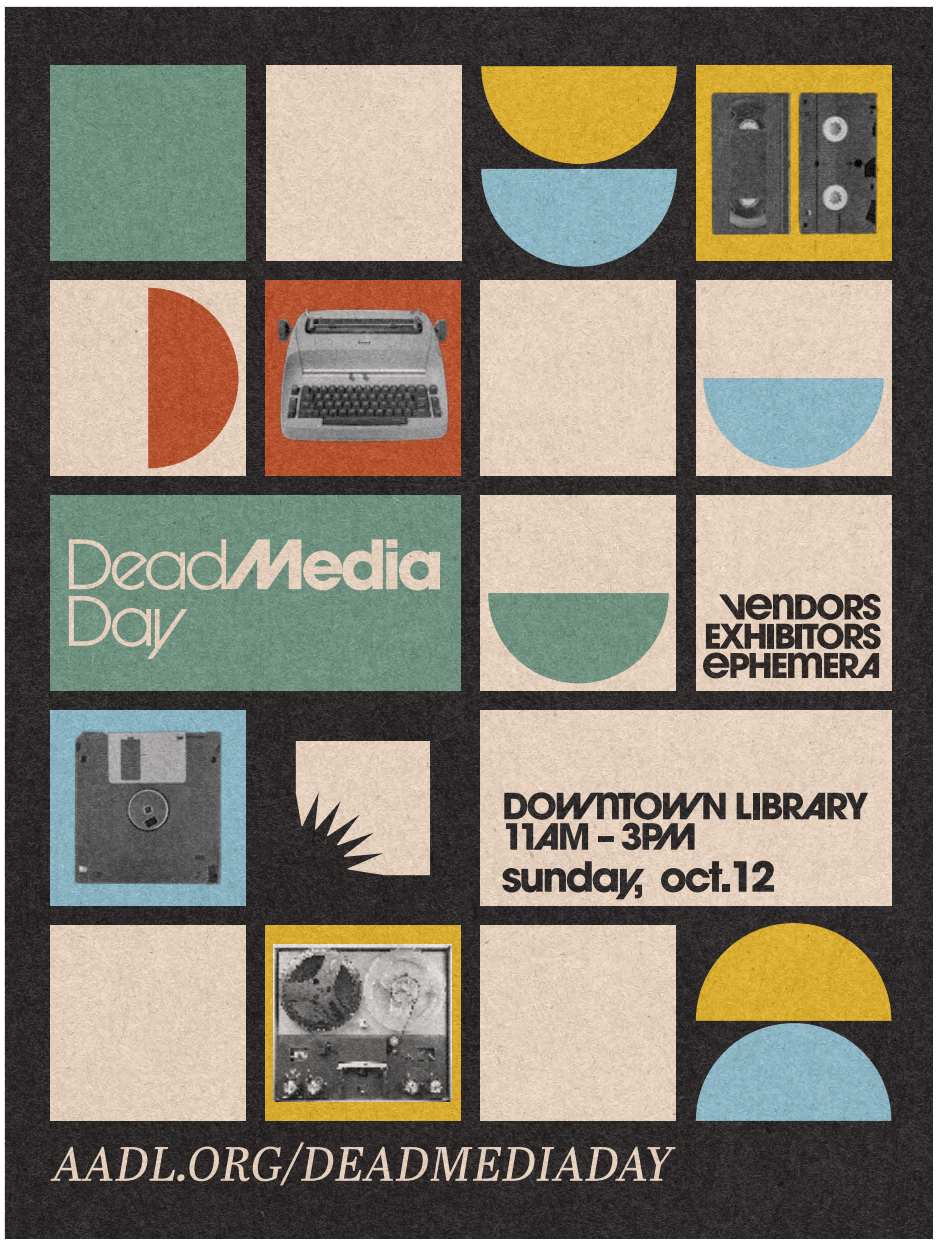




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